

HELEN DE TOURNON.

WHILE the court was occupied with these festivities, Monsieur de Varambon arrived at Paris, secluded from all observation, and attended only by David. He took lodgings in a lonely house, at some distance from the town. The man who had told him of this abode, informed him that one of the apartments was occupied by a melancholy man who avoided all intercourse with the

world, and sought to bury himself in obscurity. But he assured him that this recluse, far from being concerned, would feel obliged at being left unmolested in his solitude.

As soon as Monsieur de Varambon had established himself in this retreat, he ordered David to enquire after Mademoiselle de Tournon; where she lived; and whether she was to be seen. He was particularly enjoined to ascertain whether Monsieur de Souvré visited her frequently. David, after listening to his master with astonishment, exclaimed, "And how, Sir, would you have a poor stranger like me make all these enquiries?" This observation struck Monsieur de Varambon as very per-

continent. But was he then to endure a long period of suspense, when an hour seemed to him an age !

David did not return until evening. Monsieur de Varambon, who had passed the day in an agony of impatience, no sooner saw him than he began to overwhelm him with reproaches; but the old servant said, with a look of exultation, “ Sir, I have seen the king, the three queens, and Don Juan ; I have seen Mademoiselle de Tournon ; you ought to be satisfied.” Monsieur de Varambon recovered himself on hearing the name of Helen, and exclaimed, “ How ! hast thou seen her ? Art thou sure of it ? Who was with her ? ” “ I have seen her, as sure as

I see you. There was a gentleman near her; he eyed her constantly, but she took no notice of him. The whole company seemed lively and animated; she alone seemed cold and listless." "Where was Mademoiselle de Tournon?" said his master. "In the apartments of the Louvre, Sir." "How didst thou gain admission there?" "I met with an honest Fleming, a valet like myself, in the service of Don Juan. This name gained him an introduction to the king's attendants, who shewed him the palace; he presented me to those gentlemen, and we saw the whole court file off in procession before us." "Whither were they going?" "To mass." "Did Ma-

demoiselle de Tournon go?" "Yes, Sir." "Did she appear devout, collected." "Ah! it was by that I knew her again, such as she was at Monsieur de Balançon's. Her eyes were raised to Heaven so fervently, that she seemed to me an angel, and I think Heaven can refuse her nothing."

Monsieur de Varambon was deeply moved; a voice whispered to him, "She prays with confidence, she has deceived no one!" He felt consoled, and a genial calm refreshed his faculties. Needful as it was for him to give way to these favourable impressions to which he had so long been a stranger, he told David that he should take some repose. He

had received him with impatience ; he dismissed him mildly. David retired without wondering at the variable temper of his master, being alike accustomed to the impetuosity of his passions, and the goodness of his heart.

Next day, Monsieur de Varambon wrote to Helen. His letter was tender and submissive. He told her that no one knew that he was in Paris, as he had personal reasons for keeping his journey secret. He conjured her to inform him, if there were any means of seeing her for an instant ; and if she judged it to be proper that he should wait upon her mother. This letter was entrustedⁱ to David, who deliberately took it to the house

of Madame de Tournon. In the anti-chamber, he found several domestics, who were much disposed to laugh at his plain clothes, made after the fashion of those worn at Namur.

One of these valets, more acute than the others, having considered him attentively, asked him what service he could render him? David shewed him the letter for Made-moiselle de Tournon. "She cannot speak with you," said the man, "but I will undertake to get the letter to her, if you can rely upon me." "And why not?" answered David, "yet my master ordered me to deliver it to no one but herself." "Well then, my friend, you must

take it back, for her mother does not allow her to receive any person. I wished to oblige you, but that does not suit you ; so there is no more to be said.”

David was very uneasy ; to do the business ill, or not to do it at all, appeared to him equally dangerous. When the domestic who had so readily proffered his assistance, saw him hesitate, he drew near to him, and said, “ Come, don’t be children ; trust me with your letter, and come to-morrow for the answer.” David reluctantly gave it, and the man seizing it hastened with it to Madame de Tournon.

Since the arrival of Don Juan, she had found means to ascertain, that

this prince had invited Monsieur de Varambon to accompany him, but that the latter had refused, and was supposed to be tormented with a hapless passion. From that moment she conjectured that his brother Leopold might very possibly have been entrusted with letters from him to Helen, and she became more vigilant than ever. She prohibited, in a peremptory manner, the delivery of any paper to her daughter, and forbade that any unknown person should be allowed to approach her. In public she observed her so closely that it was impossible for Helen to know any thing of which she thought proper to keep her in ignorance.

What was her astonishment on

learning from Monsieur de Varambon's letter, that he was in Paris! Having perused it repeatedly, she saw that an answer was necessary. But how address this ardent, ungovernable youth? for as such Monsieur de Balançon had depicted his brother to her. At times she was disposed to advise him to relinquish an attachment, which should never obtain her approval, and inform him that she had entered into formal engagements with the queen of Navarre for the marriage of her daughter. But more frequently, the fear of irritating the impetuous spirit of Monsieur de Varambon disposed her to appeal, as a mother, to his generosity. Might he not feel much

flattered by her entreaty not to revive by his presence, a feeling which would involve both parties in misery! Must he not be aware that he could offer to Helen only a limited fortune, a precarious existence, dependent on the favour of Don Juan? Must he not be sufficiently acquainted with courts, to know that princely favour makes promises readily, and only fulfils them by halves?

Madame de Tournon thought that the latter reason ought to be decisive; but at some moments she judged it more consistent with maternal authority frankly to declare her determination. On this she was almost resolved, but the fear of

Monsieur de Varambon's impetuosity awed even her imperious spirit.

She passed the remainder of the night in writing various letters to him, but was satisfied with none of them. Her resolution was irrevocably fixed, but every imaginable mode of announcing it seemed fraught with objections. What alarmed her still more, was the possibility that Monsieur de Varambon, in his fury, might call out Monsieur de Souvré to terminate their rivalry by one of those mortal duels which had then become so frequent. And if, to enforce the acceptance of his challenge, he were to exhibit her letter, what would Monsieur de Souvré say? Would he not accuse her of having deceived

him, since she would appear to have been aware of her daughter's attachment? Not only would she lose his esteem, but the marriage contracted for Helen would be broken off.

These considerations appeared so weighty, that she renounced the idea of using any frankness toward Monsieur de Varambon. She thought too, that his stay in Paris might not be long; that he would be obliged either to precede Don Juan, or immediately follow him, if he wished that prince to remain ignorant of his journey. She therefore merely wrote to him in the following terms:

“ It was I, Sir, who received the letter you wrote to my daughter;

and I think I have a right to complain that you should have addressed yourself to her, for the purpose of obtaining an interview, which she neither ought to grant, nor can grant you, without my consent.

“ My office near the queen of Navarre leaves me not a moment of leisure amidst these continual festivities. Immediately after the departure of Don Juan, I shall have the honour to apprise you of the day when I shall be able to receive you, and prove by my confidence the esteem which I entertain for your character. Until then, Sir, desist from these useless overtures ; do not destroy the feelings of which

I have deemed you worthy, and which I love to cherish for you.

“ Your letter informs me, Sir, that you are here in concealment ; be assured, that I will faithfully keep your secret, and that no one shall know of your presence in Paris, provided you do not disclose it by any indiscretion of your own. My daughter shall not be informed of it, until after the departure of Don Juan ; and it is I alone, Sir, who will give her that information.

“ LA TOUR TURENNE,

“ Countess de Tournon.”

She wished to know where Monsieur de Varambon resided, and she ordered the domestic who had con-

veyed to her the letter, to endeavour to make that discovery ; therefore, when David returned for Helen's answer, the obliging valet who had promised it, told him that Mademoiselle de Tournon had not had time to write, having been constantly with her mother ; but that he thought it his duty to advise him as a friend never again to appear in that house ; for Madame de Tournon was just such a person as would order him to be thrown out at the window. David stared in utter astonishment. “ Yes, my poor friend, so things go here ; it is a custom of the country. Leave me your address, however, and I will come and see you, when my young lady delivers to me her

answer." David gave the address without hesitation, so entirely had this notable fellow won his heart.

His master, who was not so credulous, reproached him vehemently for his simplicity. "Wast thou not aware," said he, "that to make known my abode, was to betray my secret." David was not at all disconcerted; he maintained, that fortune had never favoured him so much before; him who was born however under a lucky planet! Scarcely had he spoken these words, when he was called out to a man, who delivered to him Madame de Tournon's letter, adding, that no answer was required. David took it to his master with a triumphant air;

but deeply was he shocked at seeing Monsieur de Varambon's countenance become more and more gloomy as he read, and at length assume an aspect decidedly painful.

“ See what thine imprudence may cost us ! Mademoiselle de Tournon is compromised, and assuredly rendered miserable ; it was her mother who received my letter ! ” David, unwilling to admit that he had been deceived, answered carelessly, “ Perhaps her daughter may have given it to her. ” At these words, Monsieur de Varambon could no longer contain himself. He walked with hasty steps about the chamber, and resumed his chair, but was unable to rest. She ! Helen ! treat him with

such offensive disdain ! It was impossible ! He did not believe it, yet the bare idea hurt him severely. “ Take thyself out of my sight,” said he to David, “ I cannot endure thy presence.” “ No, Sir, I will not quit you in the state you are now in ; beat me, kill me, if that will content you ; I have belonged to you since you came into the world.” The penitence of this faithful servant, and his look of alarm, excited the pity of his master. “ Remain, if thou choosest,” said he, “ thou hast wounded me mortally, but no longer fear my reproaches. Alas ! I would not cause pain to any thing upon earth.”

At this recurrence to his ill requit-

ed goodness of heart, Monsieur de Varambon was himself much affected, and he could not but weep. David, grieved to the heart at his affliction, said, "Permit an old servant to speak to you. Now that I see you are a little more tranquil, read that letter again, Sir ; perhaps it is of more value than you thought."

Anger takes no counsel but its own ; an observation aggravates it ; but pain and grief accept any advice. At this moment the simple and feeble David ruled his master ; he spoke, he was heard, he directed. Alas ! when we are alive only to suffering, it is natural to think that any one can administer comfort. Who is

there, that at least once in his life, has not felt himself so dejected that a child might have led him !

Monsieur de Varambon read over the letter with attention, half aloud, and half to himself. He commented elaborately on all the expressions. What a hard and dry style ! Yet he conceived, that a woman of her imperious character must have been offended at his writing a secret letter to her daughter. He frequently recurred to these words, “Do not destroy the feelings of which I deemed you worthy, and which I love to cherish for you.” She believed him worthy of them when she consented to bestow on him the hand of her daughter : perhaps he is still per-

mitted to hope! Yet that internal voice which never deceives, warned him that Madame de Tournon was seeking to mislead him. No matter; he is resolved to do nothing which may justify her rigour. Will he not still be able to devise some means of addressing Helen herself?

David, distracted to see his master unhappy, was sauntering mournfully in the fields. He was studying how he might persuade Monsieur de Varambon to quit a place from whence repose was banished, and where justice was unknown. He could not but recollect having heard at Madame de Tournon's, of the way in which the great rid themselves of those who importune them. This

terrible prospect alarmed him; he began to walk hastily backward and forward, talking to himself, when he was met by the melancholy man who dwelt in the same house with his master. “What ails thee?” said he, “can I help thee?” — “No,” answered David; “I perceive by your accent, as well as by your kindness, that you do not belong to this country.” — “Thy master interests me; I have studied him attentively; his noble and pensive countenance has affected me; can I serve him?” — “No,” said David with a sigh, for he tenderly loved Monsieur de Varambon.

The stranger took his arm, mechanically as it were, and in a manner

forced him to return with him, and bear him company on his walk. Desirous to win the confidence of this simple man, he began to deplore his own fate. His discourse seemed to expatiate on all the ills with which life can be made miserable. He paused at intervals, to ascertain from David's looks, whether he had touched on any trouble with which his master was afflicted. Yet it was quite evident, that he was actuated by sincere pity, and not by vain and impertinent curiosity. Hence David gradually, and without divulging Monsieur de Varambon's secrets, laid them all open to inference.

When the stranger had collected all that his genuine benevolence

prompted him to gather, he seemed to be solely intent on checking the garrulity of the too credulous David. Fixing on him his eyes, which flashed with irresistible fire, he said, in a menacing tone, "I am now informed of all that concerns your master; what assurance have you that I shall not use it to a bad purpose?" There was something so extraordinary about the man, that David was too terrified to look him in the face. "Know you not," resumed the stranger, "that this country is a volcano! The earth quakes, and a gulf may yawn under any man's feet." David had not strength to utter a word, for the fear of having compromised

feared to speak of Helen, who repined at being unable to converse with him. Chance having placed them near each other at a ball, she enquired eagerly after her sister. Every time that the movements of the dance brought them together, she questioned him in haste, and he answered in the same manner.

The music ceased not ; they were obliged to follow it, and to perform movements which separated and brought them together again ere they had time to finish a sentence. Helen dared not be the first to name Monsieur de Varambon. But perceiving that Leopold thought only of answering her, without anticipating her thoughts, she said, “And your se-

second brother?" "I do not think he is happy," answered he; and the dance again parted them.

How painful was it for her that could not learn more particulars concerning so dear an interest. But they could confer only in broken phrases; and yet their transient and brief colloquy had been remarked by Madame de Tournon. As soon as the music ceased, she summoned her daughter, who thenceforward was not at liberty for an instant.

Monsieur de Souvré could not account for the redoubled vigilance and ill-humour of Madame de Tournon. Helen was no longer permitted to speak to any one, or to take a single step without consulting

her mother's looks. She was in most instances obliged to say that she was engaged, or indisposed, that she might politely excuse herself from dancing. In short, she was watched and guarded amidst the tumult of the court.

This constraint appeared the more insupportable to Monsieur de Souvré, because it extended even to him. He ventured to complain to Madame de Tournon, that she did not make him an exception. She interrupted him by saying, "Allow, Sir, that no distinction on my part may expose sentiments which the public ought not to be acquainted with, until they hear of your marriage. You know not the absurd stories in which the

young foreigners indulge, who are in the suite of Don Juan; I do know them, and I would rather that they should laugh at my ridiculous severity, than make my daughter one of the subjects of their dissertations.”

He could not but approve this maternal solicitude, of which even the excess arose from a laudable motive, and hence Madame de Tournon was enabled with greater certainty to screen her daughter from all the attempts that Monsieur de Varambon might make to let her know that he was near her.

The public expectation was highly excited by a joust which the queen mother had appointed for the entertainment of Don Juan. On the

day fixed for it, the whole court repaired to an enclosure prepared for the royal family and the persons invited by Catherine. The banks of the river were crowded with an immense multitude. The people were pleased with this festivity because they could see it ; while the others, performed almost always in the interior of the palace, excited their murmurs.

Boats richly decorated with the arms of Spain, and bearing the cypher of Don Juan, ranged themselves in line against a flotilla manned with Turks. After different manœuvres and a combat of some duration, the Spanish flag was triumphant. The king had already given

Don Juan a medal struck in honour of the victory of Lepanto. He loved to remember that many of the brave men of France had served as volunteers, and had distinguished themselves on that occasion. But Catherine wished to exhibit to the prince a living memorial of that famous battle in which he had acquired immortal renown. When the Turks struck their colours, shouts of “Long live Don Juan,” were heard on every side. The ladies who were stationed on some steps behind the royal family, leaned forward to enjoy the surprise of the prince; they soon afterwards resumed their former posture, that they might observe him more at their ease, and

this general movement appeared like a graceful homage. Don Juan having always borne arms against the infidels, his triumph had become that of all christendom, and France might justly celebrate victories which cost her children no tears. Hence both banks of the river resounded with acclamations.

Don Juan, much agitated, could not find words to testify his gratitude to Catherine, and repeatedly declared, that such a moment was fully sufficient to recompense the labours of a whole life. He saluted a people so enamoured of glory. His emotion, his affecting gestures, threw the multitude into a transport of admiration. The trumpets soon

afterwards sounded, and warlike songs were commenced in honour of the brave ; and Helen, participating the enthusiasm which animated all around her, forgot for a moment her sorrows, her love, and her sister.

The prince was seated between Catherine and the queen of Navarre ; Mademoiselle de Tournon was stationed as usual behind the chair of Marguerite. Monsieur de Souvré, having orders not to quit Don Juan, was near Helen. She was enchanted with the spectacle ; her movements were animated, and her eyes shone with new lustre. He rejoiced to see her so alive to glory, and explained to her the Spanish devices with which the colours were

adorned. Never were his attentions so tender, perhaps because Helen had never appeared so gay.

Alas ! she little knew that Monsieur de Varambon, thinking he should be unobserved in the crowd, had come to this festivity, hoping, at all events, to see Mademoiselle de Tournon. Some of the most eager of the crowd had obtained a station very near the royal enclosure. Monsieur de Varambon was among them ; but as Helen's eyes were fixed on the joust, she saw him not.

He guessed that the person near her was Monsieur de Souvré long before any one mentioned his name to him. The gaiety of Mademoi-

selle de Tournon, her gentle look when she spoke to him, lacerated the heart of Monsieur de Varambon; he ejaculated a painful cry. Helen, astonished, looked toward the quarter whence the sound proceeded, but at that moment the court rose to retire, the people hurried toward the train of the king, and it was impossible for her to distinguish any one.

On re-entering, the queen mother, being fatigued, announced that there would be no circle in her apartments, and that the court would assemble in those of the queen of Navarre. She admitted into her intimacy none but persons highly distinguished for their wit and beauty. Such admission to her was valued as an honour,

while admission to the other princess was no more than a right. 'Though there was neither feast nor ball, Don Juan found the evening most agreeable. The conversation was witty and animated ; respect assumed the character of devotedness, and there was a gentle freedom which had the air of confidence. With all this freedom, the conversation was uniformly discreet, and had the tone of politeness and gallantry characteristic of a gay, brilliant, and magnificent court, where pleasure seems the order of the day.

The discourse accidentally turned on judicial astrology and magic, with which subjects Catherine occupied all the weak and fanciful heads about

her. Don Juan avowed his incredulity with an expression of regret, for his penetrating and restless spirit would have loved an art which could have given him a knowledge of futurity.

Marguerite, who, in all superstitious reveries, was at a loftier pitch than her mother, enjoined him not to speak irreverently of impenetrable mysteries. She informed him, that queen Catherine had a presentiment of the death of Henry II., who had even been warned that he should die in single combat. In short, she testified her conviction so strongly, that she began to inspire him with real curiosity. He begged of her that he might see one of

these magicians. “If you could content yourself with a sage of the ordinary cast,” said she, “nothing would be more easy; for there is scarcely any of these ladies who has not her astrologer by profession, whom she consults before she ventures on any undertaking, and whom she even calls her *baron*.”

This title, which Don Juan was far from expecting, amused him. The queen of Navarre also laughed at the barons; and all the ladies of the circle, desirous to contribute to the evening’s amusement, began to relate surprising occurrences which had happened to themselves, and had been predicted by their barons. Monsieur de Souvré sighed, on ob-

serving with what attentive eyes Mademoiselle de Tournon listened to these tales of wonder. Presentiments, apparitions, inevitable destiny, strokes of fate, and even ghosts, were brought into play. Helen scarcely breathed.

To distract her attention, he said to her, "Can you really attach any credit to these chimerical visions?" "Certainly not; yet if I had a friend who was sick or unhappy, I durst not answer for the strength of my reason." "There lies the danger of such follies," exclaimed Monsieur de Souvré, in a severe tone. "Be not angry," replied she, in that mild and tender tone which rendered her so interesting. "Ah!

should I have to tremble for those whom I love, why would you have my reason more durable than my life?"

No part of this dialogue escaped Marguerite. She highly approved Helen for not affecting the philosopher, by denying the existence of supernatural beings. "My child," said she, "you are a subject predestined to be enlightened." The queen spoke these words in the kindest tone; but her countenance displayed a satirical smile, which greatly puzzled Mademoiselle de Tournon. She withdrew to a short distance to hide her confusion in having drawn all eyes upon her.

As Don Juan persisted in his

whim of consulting an astrologer, the queen rejoiced that she had inspired him with that curiosity. She rose, and introducing the prince to the ladies who surrounded her, said, "Here is a hero, the greatest man of the age, another Cid of Spain, whose example will justify what the wise call our weakness." Don Juan, amiable and polite, humoured these pleasantries, which amused without offending him.

"Let us speak seriously on so grave a subject," rejoined Marguerite. "There is an Italian here who lives in a retreat unknown to the profane. His high acquirements have made him an astrologer and magician. His sole support is

derived from the queen my mother, but I shall endeavour to gain her permission for him to grant you an audience."

"I have another favour to ask," replied Don Juan. "It is, not to be admitted to this sublime genius until the day before my departure. Were he to predict that I should never return to the court of France, it would be impossible for me to enjoy the moments which I have still to pass here; but, on quitting this delightful place, I shall defy magic to augment my regret." Then lowering his voice, and addressing himself directly to Marguerite, "May destiny permit me again to see for a single instant, her whose image will

for ever live in my memory. My motto shall henceforward be, ‘ A day of happiness, an age of expectation.’ ”

The queen of Navarre, unwilling to answer in the same tone of gallantry, which, however, did not displease her, rendered the conversation general, and soon afterwards announced that she would retire.

When Monsieur de Varambon had seen Helen follow the court, and accept the arm of Monsieur de Souvré, he felt a pain so acute, that his thoughts and his reason were in a manner suspended. Night was coming on ; the crowd had dispersed ; the royal inclosure was deserted ; and Monsieur de Varam-

bon was so overpowered that he could not stir. It was there that he thought he had given Helen an eternal adieu, for he wished to leave her for ever.

Leaning against the balustrade which surrounded the enclosure, with his eyes fixed on the place which Helen had occupied, he seemed still to see her speak to Monsieur de Souvre, smile on him, and depart with him. "They are together!" cried he, and not a hope was there to console his heart, which a devouring fire was consuming. "They are together!" he repeated in agony.

David, who had followed his master, stood at some distance from him,

not daring to approach. He remarked with surprise, that the stranger who lodged in the house where they lived, was standing within two paces of Monsieur de Varambon, whom he was observing with a fixed and anxious eye. The presence of this man inspired him with a sort of dread ; and besides, this faithful servant feared that so extraordinary a mark of attention might displease his master, of whose irascible temper he was well aware. Advancing toward the stranger, he said, " What are you doing here ? " " I am observing." " By what right ? " " I stand between Heaven and misery ; I wish to see whether, in this struggle of the passions,

virtue will resume her empire.” “ I do not understand you.” “ Well then, trouble me no more ; remain to succour thy master, should he need it. I will help thee, if madness should overpower reason.”

David tremblingly approached Monsieur de Varambon, and said to him, “ That unaccountable man, who dwells with us, is here, and will not quit you.” David’s words annoyed his master, who felt, however, a savage joy in learning, that a man was intending to offend him ; he hoped that if he sought to avenge himself, the audacious assailant might rid him of the burthen of life. He rushed towards him, and said, “ Who are you, and what would you with

me?" "Who I am, imports you little; and I want nothing of you, or any man. I stay here because the solitude soothes my suffering soul." "Are you then unhappy?" "Yes, but less so than you, because it is long since my heart was wounded; while you are seized with a keen pang which you did not suppose to exist. It will not be supportable until you begin to think that it will endure!" "That it will endure!" replied Monsieur de Varambon; "Oh! may it speedily destroy my strength and my life!"

"Let me accompany you," said the man, in a tone of interest and entreaty, "A power, which acts

upon me, and which is willing to save you, orders me not to quit you.” “ And I wish to be alone. You thought to soothe me by complaining of your own lot ; but, know, that mine depends not on any one in the world ; that I will allow no man to dive into my heart in spite of me ; begone then, and let me not have the trouble of telling you so twice.” “ So, heaven and earth are under your dominion. I may not enjoy the calmness of the night ; it is not lawful for me to consider the stars whose motion nothing impedes or alters, if you do not permit me ?” “ I spoke no such nonsense ; but I wish to be free.” “ Go then to some solitary place, for the more

you are apart from mankind, the less you will have to suffer."

"Ah!" replied Monsieur de Varambon, mournfully, "I cannot tear myself from this spot, where I tasted my last of happiness! Here I saw her for the last time!" "I know all; I was near you; I guessed your torments," replied the stranger; "but an error may greatly mislead you. We cannot read our own hearts, yet we venture to judge by appearances! Know, that Mademoiselle de Tournon cannot deceive." "Who has uttered that name which was once so dear to me?" cried Monsieur de Varambon. "I who wish to preserve you for her. Come, I will tell you some

things which you may not know, and which it is important that you should know." Then grasping firmly Monsieur de Varambon's arm, he dragged him from the fearful place where he had dreaded lest he would attempt his own life.

Monsieur de Varambon was astonished at his own abasement in following a stranger without being able to break away from his control. The wretched man did not reflect that hope had re-entered his bosom at the time when his conductor told him he had things of importance to communicate to him. They regained their abode. The stranger entered the apartment of Monsieur de Varambon, where, until now, he had

never been, and he gave his orders as if he were habituated to command there.

“ You must take some repose ere you listen to me,” said he to Monsieur de Varambon : “ I will watch by your bed-side.” “ You ! and who inspired you with this solicitude ?” “ I have suffered great misfortunes, and I feel an interest in all who are wretched.” “ No, leave me ; I have already told you I wish to be alone.” “ Well then,” said the stranger in a menacing tone, “ I shall leave you, but you shall never know what I had to tell you, what I would have done for your consolation.”

Monsieur de Varambon stretched forth his arms towards him ; he could

not resolve to retain him, and he trembled to see extinguished the feeble hope which the man's promises had revived. The stranger looked at him a long time in silence. This pause of rest compelled Monsieur de Varambon to be calm. "Man," said his visitant, "subjugated by a passion which once swayed me, I must speak of myself before I come to what concerns you. Can you attend to me?" Monsieur de Varambon made a sign of assent, and the stranger began in these terms :—

"I am the last scion of the noble house of Fisiraga. I was born rich; I belonged to a family which loved me; and my foolish passion for

perusing the future has ruined me. But, far from reproaching myself for that, I still congratulate myself on the dominion which those acquirements have given me over the happy beings of this world, whose insatiable avidity is never satisfied.

“ An ambitious spirit, an ardent mind, made me always wish to look further than the objects which presented themselves to my eyes, and to possess more than it was granted to me to obtain. Instead of restraining me within the bounds of reason, my parents stimulated that passion for knowledge which consumed me. They were pleased with my efforts; and their gratified pride urged me into an obscure path, where I lost

myself. They appointed for my tutor a man who had already dived into the occult sciences to which he led me. The contemplation of the stars caused me to study all that was then written on judicial astrology ; I plunged also into books of magic, and even sought the philosopher's stone.

“ I am still persuaded that God grants to some privileged souls the gift of a foresight, which would cause them to halt at the brink of the precipice, if they would listen attentively to the internal voice which speaks to them. But the world is pleased to accuse that man of folly who is only eager for knowledge, and whom a finer and more

intimate sense enables to foresee the future.

“ I was very young when I succeeded to my paternal inheritance. All whose minds were tormented with the desire of penetrating into the mysteries of nature, flocked to me, and formed a species of court ; they never quitted me ; we were a new race of Titans resolved again to assail Heaven. My fortune diminished, but I was so rich in hope, that there was not a mortal more happy.

“ One day, on the celebration of some grand festival of the year, I went to church, for I never neglected my religious duties. I saw there

a young person of resplendent beauty. Her innocence, her modesty, seemed to render her unconscious that she was beautiful. I was struck ; I admired ; I loved ; but what do I say ? I lack expressions to describe to you the sentiments which rushed at once into my soul.

“ I took a chair near her, without causing her to raise her eyes, which were piously bent toward the ground. Her father, a venerable old man, was beside her. I recollected that he had been formerly connected with my family, and I even remembered, that I once heard him blame the education they were giving me, and censure the visionary supersti-

tions to which I was devoting my mind.

“ He eyed me incessantly. The expression of my countenance easily betrayed to him my admiration of his daughter ; and it seemed to make him uneasy. When the prayers were concluded, he motioned her to follow him. I rose at the same time, and asked him, if he would not recognize the son of his early friend, the friend of his youth. ‘ Your errors have reached me in my retreat,’ said he ; ‘ I pity you, but I will have no intercourse with you.’

“ He considered ignorance and submission a safeguard at least against extraordinary misfortunes ;

and chance had just thrown in his way a man, who, by his audacious spirit, must involve himself in deep adversity. He was disposed to forbid me his house ; happy would it have been had he persisted in obeying that monitory instinct ! But in regard to me, that was too late ; I loved with that ardour which made every feeling a passion.

“ Seeing that all depended on him, I found it necessary to mollify and please him. I begged he would permit me sometimes to see him ; I implored that he would restore my mind to reason. He fondly hoped that he might possibly bring me back to the common notions that govern mankind. Perhaps also, the

proud thought of assuming control over a character which had abjured all authority, made him consent to see me.

“ From that moment there arose a strife between us. Each sought to allure the other into the path which himself was unwilling to quit. His daughter, the fair Amicia, was always present at our discussions. Her presence inspired me with a feeling in regard to her father, bordering on respect. Without conceding an iota, I suffered him to assume a tone of austere superiority, which gave him hope that he should soon be able to convince me.

“ My splendid and preternatural notions seduced the heart of the

daughter. Educated in habits of profound devotion, she thought nothing impossible with God. She could not doubt that it might be his will to favour some predestinated being, provided he applied his contemplations to no other purpose than that of leading men to good. In short, she loved me; and therefore you must see that my sentiments gradually lost their appearance of temerity, and were no longer strange to her.

“ Her father perceived this, and he forbade her to be present at our interviews. Ever from that day she used to meet me on my arrival, and implore me not to maintain opinions which were displeasing to

that respectable old man. On retiring I found her waiting again for me, to ask me if he was satisfied.

“ In general I only answered by speaking of love. ‘ I cannot doubt your affection,’ said she, ‘ but it is my father whom you must persuade. He foresees my ruin in this world, and my eternal perdition in the life which is promised to us, if you do not renounce your errors.’ ‘ And you?’ said I.—‘ I!— I shall submit to my father.’—‘ Even if he commanded you never to see me again?’ She sighed, but spoke not; this was an answer, and I quitted her in anger.

“ I had a talent for sketching in

a few minutes the portraits of persons whose countenances struck me, so as to take an exact likeness. I had thus drawn the portrait of Amicia. On the same evening I had the imprudence to shew it to my friends, that they might make her horoscope and mine. I am convinced that her father, whose name I shall not mention, was informed of this. Perhaps his rigour was occasioned by that act of folly.

“ Unable to resist the wish to see her again, I went to his house. He rose at my entrance, and said, with a gravity that awed me, ‘ I shall not speak of the wrongs you have done us. I am prepared to forgive them, if I can save you. Your

ruin is certain ; I know, better than you, the state of your affairs. Your reputation is attacked, and men of worth begin to shun you. Renounce from this time forward your dangerous connexions, and I will continue to receive you. But if you persist, come no more to disturb those who, before they knew you, lived at peace in the practice of humble, habitual, and unobtrusive virtues. Believe me, the science most desirable to attain, is that of making one day serve as an example to the next ; and of hoping for the life which awaits us.'

“ His daughter regarded me with a look of disquietude. Had she not been present, I should have con-

sented to any sacrifice for her sake. But she had given me to understand that she would forget me, if it were her father's will; and my untameable pride would not allow me to give her that triumph. 'I could renounce,' replied I to her father, 'the labours which I have been pursuing all my life, and of which the result is almost at hand; but I will by no means abandon the friends and tutors of my youth.'

"After remaining silent some moments, he replied, 'There will be no certainty of your welfare if you submit not implicitly to my will.' He with his reason aimed to subdue me by main force; I resisted. 'Think of this,' said he, 'this

opportunity is the last you will have.' I trembled; I shuddered; I believed myself stronger than love, and exclaimed, 'You shall not bring me to so base an abandonment.' 'If it be so,' replied he, 'let us part; and accuse no one but yourself. I leave you to an eternal repentance; may it profit you!'

"His daughter, pale and trembling, had sat down, and covered her face with her hands. She said not a word in my favour, she cast not a glance to bid me stay. I left them enraged to the heart, and found not, as you did, a friend to watch over my first paroxysm of despair.

“ I passed the remainder of the night in a terrible conflict between pride and love. In the morning I was as undecided as ever ; yet I went to see Amicia. I could have wished that she should conjure me to yield to her father ; perhaps a single entreaty would have subdued me ; but my whole soul revolted at the idea of voluntary obedience.

“ In this frame of mind I arrived at her house ; and I learnt that her father had taken her away that very night. Their design must surely have been formed long before hand ; for their precautions were so well combined, that I could not find out the route they had taken.

“ I was thunderstruck ; the future seemed to me annihilated. No more

happiness! No hope! The woman whom they had left to take care of the house, pitied the state in which she saw me; she showed me into the very room where I had so rashly maintained the theories which gave offence to the old man on whom my love depended.

“ I desired to see Amicia’s chamber. No hesitation was made in showing it me. It was a sort of cell, without any other ornament than an oriel. I approached it, and saw written in her own hand, ‘ My God, open his heart again to thy celestial light !’

“ I enquired of the woman who attended me, whether Amicia had left any message; I hoped, that at

least she would have written to me. ‘My young lady commended to me the poor whom she used to attend to; and left me wherewithal to comfort them in her absence, telling me at the same time, that I should not hear from her for two years.’ Seemed she gay? said I, with a convulsive laugh, which I could not check. ‘No; but she was tranquil.’ That word revived all my fury. I hastened home; I shut myself up; I shed tears of rage; I uttered involuntary cries. When I saw you, not long ago, I thought I recognized myself as I was then; and that was my motive for remaining with you.

“For several days I refused to see any of my friends; but they forced

the door of my chamber, and then they had me in their power ; I was no more than a mere child, whom they led at will. By degrees they found means to interest me by making me resume the course of my studies. We passed days and nights in profound researches. My acquirements soon gained me celebrity. Every person at odds with fortune came to consult me.

“ I had devised cabalistic signs and mysterious combinations, which I applied to the condition of each individual. By these means I involved myself in conferences so astonishing as to create apprehension in timid minds, while they allured to me others of bolder temperament.

Being of distinguished rank, I was too proud to seek for lucre in the noble science which occupied me. On the contrary, I dispensed succours and counsel to those who owed their misfortunes to men of influence, for I hated domination of every kind.

“ Too young to be prudent, and thinking that I was conscientiously fulfilling the duty of an adept, I unsparingly foretold the misfortunes announced in my calculations. But from the poor I withheld their futurity, and congratulated them on their actual condition.

“ Reckless of my own quiet, I occasioned some trouble to persons in power. It was among them that

I delighted to scatter seeds of animosity. I knew that, after consulting me, they spoke of me disdainfully when my predictions were slow in their accomplishment ; and exhibited me as a dangerous man, if the event accorded with the horoscopes that I had projected.

“ I was ordered by government to quit the town where I was born. At my departure I perceived that I was certainly ruined ; not one of my friends who had thriven on my fortune, chose to share my degradation. I was left alone. But I had vast combinations, which promised me a brilliant career. Not knowing whither to direct my course, I came

hither to seek the Queen Mother. I knew that she was ever enquiring into the occult sciences, which have ruined me; but to which nothing can prevent me from attaching credit.

“ I waited upon her. Instead of receiving me with the distinction and publicity due to a man of my rank, she would only see me in the morning; and she would not admit me to her circles, though my birth entitled me to appear in them. I had chosen France for my asylum, and I was obliged to endure this humiliation, which wounded me mortally.

“ Catherine sends for me almost every day. She thinks herself

clever when she interrogates me in an indirect manner ; yet I seldom fail to penetrate through her equivocal phrases, to the real subject of her alarm. In this way I have frequently come at the private affairs of several families of note ; and have discovered more than one important state secret. I avail myself of my assiduity with the queen, to perform some good offices ; for among princes a secret assiduity is often better requited than a brilliant deed of service.

“ I own, I persecute the fortunate. The sight of those who are enjoying the worldly good which I have lost, vexes and offends me. But a wretch betrayed by fate and nature, a man

who has no resource left but heaven and myself, has a just claim to my protection, and I would toil night and day to serve him.

“ I shall see the queen to-morrow. I shall contrive to excite in her so much disquietude concerning your rival, as to make her prevent his marriage with a person attached to the queen of Navarre. Catherine distrusts her daughter, on account of her hatred to Henry III. the sole object of her love.”

“ Ah !” replied Monsieur de Varambon, “ take care not to injure Monsieur de Souvré. I myself would take away his life ; but he should find me his champion if any other person were to attack him.”

“What then must be done to serve you?” asked Fisiraga, in a tone of bitter irony. “If Helen can have forgotten that ardent love, that tender affection which I bore her; if she can love Monsieur de Souvré, let her be his, I consent; but in that case I will die.”

“Reflect,” answered Fisiraga disdainfully; “recollect, that if she has been able to forget all the past, you will not even be regretted.” “Not regretted!” repeated Monsieur de Varambon, chilled with terror. He pressed his forehead; he closed his eyes, as if fearful of the day-light, and shrinking from futurity. With what annihilation had he just been menaced! Could it be possible,

that Helen had so utterly forgotten him, as not even to bestow on him a regret! This horrible thought dismayed him. If, thought he, she can give away her hand and heart, at least let me not be blotted from her memory! There, at all events, let me still live! “Listen to me,” exclaimed he vehemently, “hear me! I know her! Yes, she will regret me!”

“You are involved in an impenetrable veil,” replied P’siraga; “sometimes I also think that she loves you. I was near you during the late festivity. The scream of pain which escaped you, was lost in air; Helen alone heard it; her look enquired whence came the voice which had electrified her heart. I marked her

anxious eyes wandering over the crowd, in which she could distinguish no one. Rely on me; never did I promise my support in vain; I shall be able to unravel the mysteries which envelope you both."

Meantime Marguerite was somewhat at a loss, how she should fulfil the promise she had made to Don Juan. She repaired to the queen mother; and after endeavouring to amuse her with some court anecdotes, she turned the discourse on the astrologer whom she had seen with her majesty, and stated that the prince wished to consult him.

Catherine's countenance was inflamed with wrath. "He, then, is aware of the curiosity to which I

sometimes give way?" said she to her daughter. No doubt he amuses himself with casting ridicule on a science whose depths he cannot fathom. Doubtless he has laughed at what his philosophy calls my weakness?" "No one would dare to do that in my presence," replied Marguerite mildly, for she dreaded to irritate her mother, "and I can assure you that Don Juan is inclined to believe." "I shall readily compel him," retorted Catherine with a menacing look, which made her daughter tremble. "At what time would he see Fisiraga?" "He would wish to see him on the last day which he is to pass here!" "Very well, that last remembrance shall be the most

durable. He goes away the day after to-morrow ; to-morrow evening Fisiraga shall be with you ; I will come also.” “ Could I not,” rejoined Marguerite, “ ere that time see this mysterious man, that he might tell me, whether any preparations require to be made for his reception ?” “ I will send him to you,” answered Catherine. “ Meanwhile,” she added with a sneer, “ I imagine you will have little difficulty in convincing Don Juan, that it is ever a pleasure here to anticipate his wishes.”

Marguerite regretted that he had offended her mother, by a blunder which, she saw, was extremely un-

toward. She feared she had compromised her, by exposing her to the pleasantries which Don Juan might vent on her credulity. What would be said abroad, if he were to tell, that in France queen Catherine and herself had procured him an interview with a caster of horoscopes. She reflected, but too late, that the murmurs of disappointed minds are often less dangerous than the indiscreet sallies of thoughtless gaiety.

As soon as the queen of Navarre had retired, Catherine sent for Fisi-raga to come and speak with her instantly. She was vexed that Don Juan should deem her susceptible of weakness; and she resolved to terrify, or at least to astonish him so much, as to

make him participate her superstitious fears.

She considered the science of Fisiraga adequate to her anxious enquiries into futurity, but she did not think proper to trust to it entirely, at a conjuncture in which she had, at the same time, to defend her political interests, and to avenge her offended pride.

When Fisiraga came, she immediately imparted to him every thing concerning Don Juan. "I leave prediction to your proficiency," said she, "but the knowledge of the past belongs to me; it will become the sure basis of an implicit belief, when he interrogates you respecting the time to come." Catherine had

agents in foreign courts who reported to her the progress even of the most secret intrigues. She communicated to Fisiraga all that was necessary for him to know, in order that he might quell the presumptuous spirit of Don Juan.

Fisiraga eagerly listened to the disclosures of the irritated Catherine ; but his transcendant mind saw far beyond the things which it was her intention to impart to him. No one ever applied himself more skillfully to the calculation of probabilities, when the data of character, condition, and circumstance, were laid before him.

A brilliant education, a lofty and sonorous style of speaking, a sincere-

belief in supernal intelligences, were, in reality, the magic that gave him a dominion over Catherine, which she herself believed to be preternatural. The superstitious spirit of the age had ruined Fisiraga, but it confirmed his power.

On quitting the queen mother, he waited on Marguerite. He was shown up a secret staircase, which opened into the court of the Louvre. A person in the royal confidence opened to him a private door, and conducted him into the Princess's presence. She explained this mysteriousness, by telling Fisiraga that she did not wish to weaken the belief of Don Juan, which would not fail to be the case if he knew that

she had had a previous interview with the astrologer.

The queen of Navarre was fearful that her mother's boundless confidence in Fisiraga might have prevented her from giving aid to the cabalistic and divinatory art. She, therefore, intimated to him all that he was to make Don Juan believe ; and she took care to dictate what she thought requisite to excite his dislike of Flanders, from whence she wished to remove him. Without her mentioning even the name, Fisiraga comprehended all the projects of the duke of Anjou.

His thoughts were directed solely to the means of mitigating the misery of Monsieur de Varambon. He

imagined that he might, perhaps, see Mademoiselle de Tournon with the queen, if he could contrive to attract to the interview several ladies of the court. He told her that to ensure the conviction of Don Juan, it would be desirable that she should on the same day cause him to be consulted in presence of that prince, by persons who, from eager curiosity, might wish to know their destiny.

He succeeded beyond his hopes ; for this idea afforded Marguerite additional pleasure ; she was amused at the thought of seeing Helen interrogate the magician. Her youth, her artlessness, the terror she had betrayed on the preceding day when

listening to those marvellous stories, rendered her most apt to receive all impressions which others might wish to make on her ; and her fears would not fail to augment the astonishment of Don Juan.

“ I promise you,” said Marguerite, “ that I will invite the fairest of ladies to interrogate you. Besides,” added she, in the heedlessness of her lively imagination, “ Mademoiselle de Tournon will be already persuaded” At these words Fisiraga looked gravely at the queen, and ventured to interrupt her. “ I will not, madam,” said he, “ either hear the name, or know the person whom you wish that I should see.” He begged permission to retire,

and left Marguerite greatly surprised at his refusal of those explanations which might have rendered his predictions more exact.

He hastened to Monsieur de Varambon, clasped him in his arms, and was himself overpowered with the joy which he was about to impart. He told him that he was to see Don Juan next day with the queen of Navarre ; that Mademoiselle de Tournon would be there ; that he would acquaint himself with the secrets of that young person, and win her again to her lover. But his affection, strong as it was, did not impel him to reveal any of the disclosures which had been made to him by the two queens. Still daz-

zled by his chimerical reveries, he exulted whenever he saw that his knowledge of every thing was imputed to supernatural inspiration. Perhaps he had even brought himself to think that, had he chosen, he could, by his science, have easily discovered all that had just been told him.

Monsieur de Varambon was affected by this testification of attachment ; yet he said, “ I will, by no means, have Helen restored to me through terror : I have a favour to ask of you ; conceal me from all eyes, and contrive that I shall be present when she speaks with you.” “ On being informed that I should see her, my wish was yours,” replied

Fisiraga, “but I soon saw that the thing was impossible.” “Oh! it is my happiness, my peace, my life, which I am asking of you, and for which I shall be indebted to you; for if I can convince myself that Helen, believing me far away from her, is, nevertheless, wholly occupied with me, the jealous disquietude which vexes and enrages me will for ever be banished from my heart.” Fisiraga looked on him as if wishing to ascertain how far he could depend on himself; and Monsieur de Varambon continued his supplication with an ardour which allowed not the astrologer to utter a direct refusal.

“Listen to me,” replied Fisiraga.
“An extraordinary power, which confuses my reason, forces me in some measure to submit, though reluctantly, to your will ; but it cannot ordain me to expose your life and mine.” “Do you think me capable of an indiscretion which would compromise your safety ?” “To my sorrow, I have known what it is to love,” replied Fisiraga, mournfully.
“I am sure that if Monsieur de Souvré were to appear with Helen, nothing would prevent you from quitting your retreat. At this moment I see you with those eyes of the soul which look into futurity ; yes, I see you rush upon him ; his death, your

death, would be the price of my fatal compliance, and I should expiate my weakness in a dungeon.”

Monsieur de Varambon, laying his hand on his heart, said, in the solemn tone in which oaths are made, “I swear by all that is sacred to a man of honour, that I would not say a word, I would not even move, even were I to hear Helen avow that she loved me no more.” Fisiraga made no answer. He keenly reproached himself for having given way to his too easy good nature. He thought that if he had not spoken of the interview which he was to have with Don Juan, he might have served his friend without exposing him to cer-

tain danger. Yet the sad and melancholy air of Don Juan gradually moved his compassion. Unable to suppress the emotion, he approached him, and said, "Unfortunate youth ! as insane as I myself was, invoke me in the name of Amicia ! ask me, for her sake, to grant your prayer ; and at least, if I be the victim of this signal folly, you will not have to reproach yourself, for I shall have obeyed Amicia."

Monsieur de Varambon repeatedly declared that he could not believe that there was such danger to be apprehended. "Ah !" replied Fisiraga, "know you not that those who in this world meddle with preter-

natural sciences, become the sport of powers truly infernal ! Know you not that Henry III., greatly to the honour of his good sense, threatened to put to death a magician whom he had not disdained to consult. But that is not the only peril to be dreaded. Were it known that I had introduced you secretly into the presence chamber of the queen of Navarre, we should be accused of employing cabalistic means to promote a love intrigue. The terrible mother of Helen would vent her rage aloud ; your honour and mine would be compromised ; we should become publicly notorious, and objects of just alarm to all families. Have you considered that ?” “I confess that

those reflections never occurred to my mind, but they serve only to give stronger force to the oath I have taken, without diminishing the desire which I feel. Believe me, I can answer for myself.” “Reflect ! examine yourself with severe attention,” answered Fisiraga ; “consult your powers, and meanwhile, allow me here to commence a labour which I must perform.”

He then retired to a corner of the room, placed a table before him, and opened some large papers, on which he appeared much occupied. Monsieur de Varambon, fearing to disturb him, silently indulged the thought of seeing Helen again, for

he felt that the objections of Fisi-raga were losing their force.

He perceived that this incomprehensible man frequently looked at him without speaking, traced a few lines on a paper, and then looked again. His expressive eyes shewed sadness and disquietude, but at the same time an attachment which re-animated Monsieur de Varambon. At night he put up his papers, and said, "I shall go to-morrow morning to the queen of Navarre. Ere I depart, I will revisit you ; meantime continue your self-examination, and probe your own heart without shrinking."

He waited not for an answer, but

went away. Monsieur de Varambon passed the night in reflecting on his situation. The idea of practising on culpable credulity was offensive to him; yet he could not forego his wish to detect the secret sentiments of Helen. Next morning Fisiraga appeared and stood before him without uttering a word. Monsieur de Varambon said, "I renew to you my oath." Fisiraga raised his eyes to heaven, as if Amicia had appeared to him, and exclaimed, "O! thou whom I so ardently loved, to what shall I not have exposed myself for the sake of seeing thee again? can I be inexorable to him who believes himself menaced with the same misfortune which I have suffered?" He held

forth his hand to Monsieur de Varambon, and went away, desiring him to wait his return.

Fisiraga was shewn to the queen of Navarre in the same mysterious manner as on the preceding day. He requested of Marguerite that he might speak with Don Juan in that very room, which seemed to him well adapted for his designs. It was entirely hung with draperies of brown velvet, from the ceiling to the carpet ; so that the company within could not perceive the door communicating with the staircase. Fisiraga thought it would be easy for Monsieur de Varambon to remain near that door ; and through the folds of the drapery he might see

what was passing in the room, hear what was said, and escape, if need were.

Fisiraga directed that there should be two arm-chairs of equal make and form, the one for Don Juan, the other for himself. This equality startled the queen ; but he said with a lofty air, “ He whose curiosity concerning the future, torments him so that he must interrogate me, either lowers himself or elevates me ; at all events I value my knowledge of nature so much as to think that on this day it is I who must be superior to the powers of the world.”

Marguerite smiled in pity, but consented to humour his weakness.

“ I also desire,” said he, “ that I may be permitted to bring one of my people to attend me, as I shall have to return at midnight. He shall wait on that staircase.” This precaution appeared to Marguerite so natural, that it excited no surprise.

Fisiraga caused the arm-chairs and other seats reserved for the court to be placed as far from the table as possible. Ever intent on Mademoiselle de Tournon, it was his wish to speak to every one separately, so as to be heard only by the person who came to consult him.

These arrangements being made, he returned to inform Monsieur de Varambon of them. “ I am sacri-

being myself," said he sorrowfully ;
" will you remember it ? I am alone
in the world. I have lost, through
my own fault, all the good things to
which men attach any value ; and I
regret only the affection of those who
were mine. My desolation oppresses
me ; I need a heart that can love
me ; tell me if I have found one ?"
Monsieur de Varambon earnestly as-
sured him of his gratitude, of his
affection ; for he was much moved
with the attachment of a man who,
almost without knowing him, seemed
to be devoted to him.

" What is the age of Mademoiselle
de Tournon ?" asked Fisiraga. " Se-
venteen." " Without your aid I shall
become sufficiently acquainted with

the important circumstances of her life; but mine would not be long enough, if I were to tell the minute details which form the history of each day, and become ever memorable with those who love. Have you her portrait?" "She was incapable of granting me such a favour, and I could not have asked it of her." "You are more worthy than I," said Fisiraga sighing, "for I took that of Amicia by stealth. But where is the lover that knows how to draw, and can resist the pleasure of tracing the features of her whom he loves? Have you given her no token of remembrance?" Monsieur de Varambon mentioned his mother's ring, which Helen had accepted. Fisiraga, ever prone to

mournful and mysterious forebodings, shuddered. "Why," said he, "mingle the power of death with the destiny of the living?" After a long pause of meditation he added, "You obeyed an unknown power; we must hold it in respect."

As the hour fixed for visiting the queen of Navarre drew near, Fisiraga said to Monsieur de Varambon, "I know not what will happen to me; but I want to tell you that, from the very moment you entered this house, I felt myself attracted to you by an irresistible emotion. Your noble and melancholy countenance affected me: I would have given much to mitigate your pains. I have often followed you when you wandered by

night in the fields. I feared for you, and knew you not. I stood aloof, to save you from yourself, or to defend you. At length, under this starry vault, when you thought you were alone, I said to myself, ‘ He is less to be pitied than I, for he has a friend.’ ”

They arrived at the Louvre, and ascended the staircase in silence. Fisiraga knocked thrice ; the secret door was opened to them, and he directed that it should not be closed. According to orders which they had received, the queen’s people had withdrawn. He placed Monsieur de Varambon between the door and the drapery, through which he made an imperceptible puncture, affording a

view of the interior of the chamber. Ere he quitted him, he again gave him an anxious look. Monsieur de Varambon understood him, and pressed his hand with an emotion which banished all Fisiraga's fears.

Soon afterwards, the door of Marguerite's apartment flew open, and the whole court entered with loud expressions of gladness. Fisiraga was introduced to Don Juan. The court took their stations at a distance from the table near which the prince and the magician took their seats.

Fisiraga looked at Don Juan long and steadfastly ; his eyes seemed to penetrate his very soul. At length he demanded if he might tell him the whole truth? " The whole,

until I give orders to the contrary," said the prince. That tone of authority roused the rebellious spirit which agitated Fisiraga. "Well, then," said he; "you are here, without the consent of an anxious and suspicious power, jealous of your glory. That power sent you into the Netherlands, to pacify them, not to conquer them. It will deem itself vanquished at every victory you gain over your enemies. Beware not to displease it. Tremble to serve it. Ill success will be an injury; your triumphs will be crimes. This morning you laid the foundation of a plot. You have been offered the hand of a widowed queen, who is young and beautiful; you will not obtain it. Imprisonment.

abduction, intestine wars, are the thoughts which agitate your soul.” These words gave Don Juan a shock so violent as to be observable by all. Fearing that the discourse of Fisiraga, though addressed to him alone, might be overheard, he begged him to lower his voice.

How could Don Juan help being struck with amazement ! The very day before, the Duke de Guise had signed a league with him. He had proposed to him to land in England for the purpose of carrying away Mary Stuart from prison : he had flattered him with the hope of obtaining her hand, in case he should succeed in re-establishing her on the throne, by the aid of her numerous

and zealous partisans in England and Scotland.

The Duke de Guise, persevering in his artful policy, affected to cover all his designs with the veil of religion. He sought to elevate the great soul of this prince ; he told him that the avenger of christendom, the hero of Lepanto, the conqueror of Tunis, he who had made its king a prisoner, and had triumphed wherever he fought, that he alone could successfully attack the queen of England, and maintain the interests of the church by destroying its most dangerous enemy. He spoke to him with admiration of that royal standard which had just been raised in the Netherlands, displaying a lu-

minous cross, around which were inscribed these words : —“ By this sign, I have vanquished the Turks, and will vanquish the heretics.”

These important projects, which Don Juan supposed to be wholly unknown, had been revealed to Catherine by a lady who possessed the entire confidence of the Duke of Guise; and Fisiraga detailed them as well to serve the policy of Catherine as to maintain his reputation for the marvellous.

As soon as the prince had desired him to lower his voice, the magician felt assured of his dominion. After tracing to Don Juan the picture of his past life, he conjured him, in a solemn and prophetic tone, to avert

the fate which awaited him. "Your most secret intentions are known," said he. "The impatient desires of a noble ambition will expose you to inevitable danger." Fisiraga menaced him with a terrible futurity. He saw him daily exposed to new attacks, and the hand of death at length snatching him away in the bloom of his youth and glory.

Catherine, who observed all the movements of Don Juan, remarked that he questioned Fisiraga with anxiety. She congratulated herself on her success in alarming the imagination of the prince, and enjoyed the trouble with which she had agitated his soul. Suddenly Fisiraga was heard to exclaim, "Do you re-

member Don Carlos and Elizabeth of France?" At these words Don Juan was struck with secret horror ; he rose up, saying, "Enough, enough ; I will see you again !" He took refuge by the side of Marguerite without recovering sufficient calmness to answer the questions which she put to him.

All eyes were fixed on Don Juan ; his emotion astonished the most daring, and alarmed the credulous. Mademoiselle de Tournon contemplated him with a feeling that scarcely permitted her to breathe. So great, so brave a prince, could he attach credit to preternatural revelations ? Helen's mind rejected them, but her heart unwillingly be-

lieved in them. Fisiraga gave the finishing blow to her already vacillating reason, by saying, with a loud voice, "Let her who has received a ring of death as a token of alliance, come and listen to me." Helen took this to herself. Terror suddenly possessed her soul; she forgot the court and her mother. She rose, and traversed the room with a slow step to approach Fisiraga. Madame de Tournon called her back; her daughter heard her not; even Marguerite was astonished; the court seemed uneasy. Monsieur de Souvré darted forward to detain her; he conjured her to stop. She extended her hand, and motioned him to remain where he was. The pale and

solemn mien of Mademoiselle de Tournon subdued him in spite of himself. He dared not contravene her orders, but he kept his eyes on her, and cursed these horrible superstitions.

Helen stood near Fisiraga; he pitied the trouble which oppressed her. Yet he said to her in a low tone, "I speak to you in the name of him who is to be the arbiter of your destiny. Woe be to you if you betray his love." He took a mirror and held it before Helen, who uttered a scream on perceiving the features of Monsieur de Varambon, exhibiting a furious and menacing look.

A deadly chillness stole upon her

heart ; her eyes no longer distinguished any thing ; her limbs trembled. Monsieur de Souvré rushed forward and received her in his arms. She recognised his voice, and needing, as she did a support, she pronounced his name in an imploring tone. “ Take me hence,” said she, “ I feel I am dying.” He bore her near the queen of Navarre, placed her in an arm-chair, and threw himself at her feet. He watched with trembling anxiety to see if her colour returned, and if her life were renewed to revive him. Madame de Tournon, alarmed at this scene, repelled Monsieur de Souvré : “ See you not,” said she, “ that all eyes are on us ? Leave my daughter and

retire.” — “ Ah ! Madam,” said he, “ deign to call me your son ; and let me watch over Mademoiselle de Tournon.” — “ Yes,” replied Marguerite, who wished by publicity to render this engagement irrevocable. “ Yes, she alone was worthy to be your happy wife.” — At these words, Fisiraga could no longer restrain himself; he exclaimed, “ Woe ! woe ! ” and disappeared to succour his friend.

Helen slowly recovering, had heard the last words of the queen ; they explained to her, that her majesty wished to give her hand to Monsieur de Souvré. She cast on him a look of entreaty, and said, in a plaintive voice, “ Ah ! believe me,

I have long foreseen the fate reserved for me; the veil and the eternal vow will be my portion!" Marguerite and Madame de Tournon attributed this expression to her perturbation, which had not subsided. They both led Helen away, and caused her to be placed in a room, where, alone and retired, she might be able to take some repose.

Monsieur de Souvré dared not follow them. He remained in affliction, and was distracted to observe the whole company conversing in a state of anxious curiosity. His eyes sought Fisiraga: he wished to know by what secret artifice he had been able to overwhelm so innocent and pure a mind. He recollected,

that the magician had spoken of a ring of death; could the madman mean to predict to her a premature end.

Madame de Tournon soon re-appeared in the train of Marguerite. Her stern air created a pause in the conversation. The queen affected that gaiety and carelessness so well calculated to weaken the impressions which she wished to obliterate. She hastened to speak of Helen first, and said, "She has not returned with me, because she is somewhat ashamed of her credulity; but we left her laughing at the fright into which the magician threw her." At these words, all began to censure that dangerous man, and to laugh

at the awe and belief with which he had inspired them. Monsieur de Souvré went out to seek him, but he was gone.

Fisiraga had found Monsieur de Varambon pale, motionless, and with merely life and strength left to keep his oath. He led him away, and took him home, without being able to draw from him a single word. Much did he reproach himself for having drawn Monsieur de Varambon's portrait without his knowledge, and for having presented it to Mademoiselle de Tournon. Yet his belief in destiny grew stronger; "surely," thought he, "it was the evil genius who prompted me to exhibit to Helen features formerly so dear,

and which now accused her." Fisiraga endeavoured to raise Monsieur de Varambon from the dejection in which he was plunged. It was in vain that he sought to irritate or to soften him. His cares, his presence, neither consoled nor hurt him. Helen alone was present to his mind.

About midnight David presented to Fisiraga a letter which had been brought by some unknown person. He said, that, after delivering it, the man ran away as if afraid of being pursued. Fisiraga recognized the writing of the person who was in Catherine's confidence. "Fly," said she, "the king is enraged; he has been told of the scenes which

took place at the court of the queen of Navarre. He is determined to be informed how the secrets which you revealed to Don Juan came to your knowledge. You are sought ; lose not a moment. Wherever you go, you will hear from us. Burn this note."

"I am lost," exclaimed Fisiraga, "and I foresee the fate which awaits me. Besides, existence is a burthen to me." Monsieur de Varambon revived on learning the danger which threatened this unfortunate man. "I will save you," said he, "I also will fly from this horrible country. But do not speak to me ; the human voice makes me ill." Monsieur de Varambon and Fisiraga were soon

ready to go, and when day dawned they were far on their journey.

When Marguerite and Madame de Tournon had taken charge of Helen to lead her into a private room, that terrible mother gave vent to her anger. She bitterly reproved her daughter for having so committed herself in presence of the whole court. Her strong, full, harsh voice growled like thunder. Helen, viewing her with vacant eyes, called on death to deliver her from her tortures.

Marguerite, who, alone in the world, had some sway over Madame de Tournon, drew her away from her daughter. "Will you deprive her of reason?" said she, in a

low tone. "Rather let us leave her to herself; and do you come and rejoin Monsieur de Souvré, who must be deeply concerned at so extraordinary a scene. Besides, we ought, believe me, to treat this matter jocously." Ere they went away, she drew near Mademoiselle de Tournon, and tried to re-assure her by saying, so as not to be heard by her mother, "I watch over your repose; be calm; neither misery nor happiness are lasting." It was at this juncture that Marguerite and Madame de Tournon had re-entered the saloon.

Helen, left to herself, knew not what to think, or how to determine. Could she believe her own eyes?

Was there a possibility of doubt? She fancied herself in an abyss from which nothing could raise her. She asked herself why the magician had the power to shew her the likeness of Monsieur de Varambon? Why he had that menacing air? What had she done? Did he not possess all her affection? She might die, but should never cease to love him! Her head was bewildered with conjecturing how Fisiraga could have known of that mysterious ring. At that moment she drew it from her bosom, where she always kept it concealed from her mother's observation. On looking at it she called to mind the instant when Monsieur de Varambon had given it to

her. How he loved her then! She felt her tears flow; her eyes rested on the ring, which, until now, she had regarded with religious respect, without daring to wear it. She fell on her knees, lifting her hands, her soul, towards heaven; she invoked angels to witness whether she should not for ever be his, be true to Augustus. For the first time, and as if she were at the altar, she put on her finger this ring of alliance, and pledged herself for life.

Footsteps were heard; some one approached. Helen rose with a calmness that nothing could disturb, for her resolution was unalterable. Marguerite advanced; she was followed by Madame de Tour-

non. Helen was no longer the same as they had seen her; she spoke firmly; her movements were gentle and easy. She thanked the queen for her kindness, and asked pardon for yielding to a preternatural terror. Her mother raised her voice to give her another reprimand. "I know all you would say, madam," said Helen, "but an unaccountable feeling overpowered me." "Ah!" rejoined Madame de Tournon, "feelings, stronger than reason can justify, are accusations." Helen listened to her mother respectfully. She was tranquil; her prayer had been heard in heaven.

Madame de Tournon bade her daughter tell her what Fisiraga had

said. "That is a secret between heaven and myself," replied Helen. "What did you see in the mirror?" "Features which are indelible." "What means that ring of which the magician spoke?" Mademoiselle de Tournon was silent. Neither the wraths of her mother, nor the entreaties of the queen of Navarre, could prevail with her to give a further explanation.

Monsieur de Souvré adored Helen, yet he could not conceive how he had been able to entreat that imperious mother to call him her son, ere he had ascertained whether Mademoiselle de Tournon's consent was free and voluntary. What had become of his resolution not to declare

his sentiments until he should be certain that her heart accorded with his? In another instant he had forgot all; he saw no object but Helen in a swoon, and pale as death. His love had betrayed itself; but he felt not that bliss with which the certainty of obtaining her hand should have filled him.

He returned home, pensive and dejected; and on entering his apartment, found a letter from Madame de Balançon, enclosing another for her sister. She begged he would deliver it as secretly as possible. All his painful feelings instantly vanished; he was alive only to the pleasure which Helen was about to enjoy.

“What a happiness is it for my sister and me, Sir,” wrote Madame de Balançon, “that we can maintain through a man of honour, a correspondence so innocent and natural, that it ought to have neither impediment nor medium. But, as you guessed, my mother is rather jealous of her children’s attachment: it is our duty to pay deference to an anxiety which proves to us her affection.” Madame de Balançon concluded with some expressions of esteem for Monsieur de Souvré, but said not a word on the hopes which he had suffered himself to manifest.

Despite of all his resolutions, there was he, the confidant of a correspondence unknown to a mother! He

blamed himself for it, and judged it to be an ill requital for the trust which Madame de Tournon had reposed in him. Yet he soon tranquilized his mind by reflecting how much Helen would be delighted, and by resolving that this should be the first and the last time he would have any thing to conceal from Madame de Tournon.

Next day he went to her house with a joyful heart ; but he found her alone, and she received him very formally. He ventured to ask, if he might see Helen ? She answered, that she was still indisposed, and in affliction. This blight to his joy and his hopes revived Monsieur de Souvré's wrath against the execrable

magician. He wished to know what the man could have said to strike Mademoiselle de Tournon with such terror. "My daughter herself cannot tell; when she approached him, she was already disturbed at the foolish credulity of Don Juan, and can only recollect the moment when she saw you near her." "But," replied Monsieur de Souvré, "what could have induced her, who is so reserved and so timid, thus to present herself to notice?" "Ah! as to that, I think you, Sir, contributed more than any other person to fix the general attention on my daughter." "Can you think, Madam, that I should have been able to control myself on seeing Mademoiselle

de Tournon dying?" "I myself would have succoured her; but, however, it was a ridiculous scene, which terminated very fortunately for you as well as her; so at least I should hope."

Their conversation was interrupted by the queen of Navarre, who entered without causing herself to be announced. She came, she said, to enquire after her favourite, and affected a gaiety which she was far from feeling; for the queen mother had sent to caution her not to expose herself to the first burst of the king's anger.

Marguërite, addressing herself to Monsieur de Souvré, congratulated him, in a laughing way, on having

found happiness without consulting the oracle. She then added, that Don Juan had set out in the morning, and that she was very sorry he did not depart the day before. She said he must have been mad to wish to interrogate a man who played upon his unquiet and superstitious mind. In short, all her displeasure rested on Don Juan, who had been honoured with such festivities; and on Fisiraga, whom she herself had been at the pains of prompting.

As the queen of Navarre wished to see Helen, Madame de Tournon rose to follow her; and Monsieur de Souvré was obliged to take his leave. When he was gone, Madame de Tournon asked the queen to stay

a moment. She then entreated her guidance in her present embarrassed situation. — Marguerite remarked with surprise the uneasiness and constraint of that haughty woman, and listened to her with particular earnestness. Madame de Tournon began by declaring that her resolution of marrying Helen to Monsieur de Souvré had undergone no change ; but admitted that there existed some difficulties, and apologised for not having sooner disclosed them to the queen. She thought that in such circumstances discretion was a duty. After a long preamble, she confided to her Helen's first preference of Monsieur de Varambon, and the interruption of their intended union

as soon as it was proposed. Since, however, the event of the preceding evening, when her daughter had spoken of the veil and the vows, it was to be feared that she retained for him too tender an attachment.

Marguerite, delighted with an opportunity of retaliating on her gentlewoman the just but fruitless remonstrances, with which that lady had often wearied her, disapproved of her conduct. She represented to her, that an indulgent mother might have reclaimed Helen, by winning her confidence; while, as she had been left to struggle alone with this first passion of a young heart, it might now, perhaps, be difficult to dispose of her.

“ Ah !” replied Madame de Tournon, “ I shall easily force my daughter to obey me.” — “ The words force, command, obey, are quite in your style,” replied the queen ; “ but will you have the same rights, the same authority over Monsieur de Souvré ?”

“ I think that, after the scene of yesterday, this marriage is inevitable.” — The remark made Marguerite laugh. “ There is often more justice than we think of in speaking of marriage as of death ; *inevitable* is a most applicable term.” Yet she reflected with a sigh, that she also had been compelled to bestow her hand, when her heart was no longer her own. But this reference to her own case, though it gave her pain,

did not dispose her to protect the affections of Helen. She did not even think of them.

The queen of Navarre was much disappointed by an obstacle which might defeat an useful project ; for she was thinking of her personal concerns. Certainly she could not wish to render Mademoiselle de Tournon unhappy ; but then happiness seemed to her so transitory and precarious, that the pursuit of it was ridiculous. Monsieur de Souvré's power over the mind of the king was the sole object of real importance that she could see in this affair. If Marguerite bestowed a single thought on Monsieur de Varambon, it had still some relation

to herself. She knew that connected as he was with all the most considerable families in Flanders, he might serve the interests of the duke of Anjou ; but this idea passed through her mind with the rapidity of lightning. It was at the Louvre that she wished to fix Helen ; yet she perceived some advantages which her brother might derive from the rank and influence of Monsieur de Varambon in the Netherlands ; and she possibly might revert to him, if it were absolutely necessary to renounce Monsieur de Souvré.

She foresaw the obstacles which she should have to surmount. She amused herself with unravelling all the clues by which she might be able

to lead the imperious Madame de Tournon, the virtuous Monsieur de Souvré, the young and noble-minded Helen. The more perplexity she found, the greater was her satisfaction. To her a difficult intrigue was a real pleasure.

Meantime, Marguerite declared to Madame de Tournon that she was going to Helen, and that she chose to see her alone. "As you know not how," said she, "to wean the heart of a young girl, or to captivate her reason, I will not have you meddle any more with this marriage. Continue in the loftiness of command, and I will undertake to procure obedience."

The queen of Navarre was much

surprised to find Helen risen, as she believed her to be ill. Mademoiselle de Tournon admitted that her mother had forbidden her to appear before her until she should be determined to obey. Marguerite shrugged her shoulders with a dissatisfied air. “I know your situation,” said she, “and all the secrets of your young heart; but it is neither by resistance, nor by frankness of avowal, that you will disengage yourself from this embarrassment. I will be your friend. First, you must come with me to your mother; you must thank her for her solicitude for your happiness; and we will ask time for you to accustom yourself to the idea of an union,

which, until last evening, you never heard mentioned."

"Madam," answered Helen, in a gentle but firm accent, "my refusal is positive; my determination is irrevocable." "Ah!" replied the queen, "*irrevocable* is one of those grand words which your mother likes only when she uses them herself. You must repeat my words exactly; and as to Monsieur de Souvré, if he speaks to you, you will tell him that you must reflect before you engage yourself for life." "Madam, I have too much esteem for Monsieur de Souvré, and too much respect for myself, not to be sincere with him; he shall read my heart as well as I do."

Marguerite deemed this to be a dangerous resolution, for she hoped to induce Helen to yield to the wishes of Madame de Tournon. She chose to prejudice her for a moment against Monsieur de Souvré, rather than permit her to make avowals which could not afterwards be forgotten. She therefore assumed that air of pity which is usually shewn towards a person who is deceived, and said, “ My child, your wish to be frank and sincere is very laudable ; but in asking for time, you will only imitate Monsieur de Souvré, who, on his part, asked time of your mother. I must tell you ; it was shortly after your arrival here, that she promised him your hand.”

Helen could not imagine that Monsieur de Souvré had been capable of abusing the esteem which she felt for him, in order to pry into her heart, in some degree against her will; she could not think that he wished to owe her hand solely to her mother's authority. "I was ready to confide to him my most secret thoughts," said she to herself; "I felt regret, and almost remorse, in having sentiments of which he was ignorant; yet, without my consent, he regarded me as a property which already belonged to him. Had I ventured to speak to him, I should have found a judge, while I supposed myself addressing a friend." This new misfortune completed the dis-

couragement of Mademoiselle de Tournon. “Ah!” cried she, painfully, “in whom then can I confide!”

“In me!” replied the queen. “Yet I was in the secret; but I saw you destined to a most desirable marriage; and I was ignorant, but a moment ago, that you were engaged to Monsieur de Varambon.” — “Who mentioned him to you?” asked Helen in alarm. — “Your mother.” — “Ah! why did she not allow me to speak of him myself! I should have disclosed to her the state of my mind, and perhaps she would have been pleased to let me live with her in tranquillity, without seeking to constrain my sentiments.” — “That would have been a wiser

course," said the queen, "but let us not recriminate on what is passed. Your mother is steeled in self-will and despotism. The word *irrevocable*, which you used just now, suits her better than you. In short, as I have already told you, what is now to be done is to gain time; and for this purpose we must ask it, so as not to offend your mother or shock Monsieur de Souvré; for that she would never forgive you. Then we will consult together on what will best insure your happiness. . . . I am going back to Madame de Tournon's, and you will come when I send for you."

Helen remained, absorbed in reflection. Should she at so young an

age, be doomed to a life of mistrust ; and when she felt inclined to bestow esteem, must she shrink in apprehension, and say all is deceitful. A servant now announced, that the queen was expecting her.

She trembled on presenting herself before her mother ; she had scarcely strength to move. Marguerite, wishing to avoid all explanation, said to her with much kindness, “ Come, my child, Madame de Tournon consents to let me dispose of you. Thank her ; and follow me, both of you, for I will not see the king in his first moments of anger.” She added with a smile, “ That infernal magician has made us all commit many acts of imprudence !”

“ The most extraordinary of which,” replied Madame de Tournon, darting a terrible look on Helen, “ was committed in my family ; the shame of it recoils on me ; and this I could not have expected.” “ Indulgence !” said Marguerite, “ you have promised it me ; and I will not have these follies mentioned again without my permission.” She took Madame de Tournon’s arm, to return to her apartments, and made a sign for Helen to follow.

Poor Helen was walking sorrowfully behind them, when, in the grand corridor of the Louvre, they met Monsieur de Souvré. He uttered an exclamation of joy on seeing Mademoiselle de Tournon. After

making his obeisance to the queen, he approached Helen. "How happy am I to see you," said he, "it was said that you were ill." She made no answer, and could scarcely conceal her embarrassment. Monsieur de Souvré had testified such heartfelt happiness in seeing her, that it was impossible for her to doubt his attachment. But how was she to explain to herself the fact of a man of virtue and sensibility, seeking to obtain her against her will.

He offered her his arm, which she dared not refuse. Then slackening his pace to be more at a distance from her mother, and out of hearing, he said, "I have received a letter for you, Mademoiselle. I

am going to my apartments for it ; I shall rejoin you in those of the queen of Navarre." He instantly went away, leaving her much surprised, that any one should have had recourse to Monsieur de Souvré to convey to her a letter, which might as well have been sent directly to herself.

Her mother had several times looked back with anxiety ; she wished to know what Monsieur de Souvré could have to say to her daughter, and especially what would be her answer ; but on seeing him go away so promptly, she was in extreme agitation. Marguerite, on entering her apartment, passed with Madame de Tournon into a retired cabinet.

Helen was alone when Monsieur de Souvré returned, enraptured with the pleasure which Mademoiselle de Tournon was about to experience. “Here is a letter from Madame de Balançon,” said he; “conceal it instantly. I should be much grieved if your mother were to discover that it came to you through me.” And observing her look of astonishment, he owned that, being affected by the anxiety which her sister’s silence gave her, and moved by her tears, he had written to Madame de Balançon to obtain from her a line which might relieve her suspense.

Helen too well knew the jealous disposition of Monsieur de Varambon not to perceive at once how much

that letter must have hurt him. "Great God!" said she, clasping her hands, "what must he have said! This, then, was the cause of his menacing look!" "Who is there that can have such dominion over you as to dare to use menaces?" rejoined Monsieur de Souvré, chilled with fear, for a fatal light was breaking in upon him. "Ah!" replied she, "why did you not consult me?" She quitted him, because she could no longer speak to him, and was unable either to bear his looks or to await her mother's coming.

Monsieur de Souvré was confounded. A thick cloud seemed to obscure his sight; he knew not whom Mademoiselle de Tournon loved,

but he was sure that he himself was not the object of her interest ; yet she appeared so unhappy, that a tender compassion mingled with his despair. He reflected that he had never seen her alone, that she had not been able to bestow on him her confidence, and that Madame de Tournon had taken care to enjoin him that he must avoid any private interview with her daughter. The strange conversation which he had of late held with that imperious mother recurred to his mind ; doubtless Helen's secret attachment was known to her ; it was her pleasure to sacrifice a daughter ! She became the object of his indignation. He traversed the chamber with hasty

steps, and was no longer conscious of being near the queen of Navarre. That princess returned, accompanied by Madame de Tournon. The sight of this odious woman was insupportable to him. He cast on her a look of disdain, and went away without even saying a word to Marguerite.

As soon as Mademoiselle de Tournon was alone, she opened her sister's letter. "I have at length heard of thee," wrote Madame de Balançon. "Since thy departure, my mother, at long intervals, sought to give me ease by telling me that thou wast in good health, and greatly amused at the court of the queen of Navarre. I felt happy that health had withstood so many vexations, and I knew

thee too well to think that thou couldst so easily have forgotten us.

“ My brother-in-law quitted us on the very day, when thou wast snatched from my bosom. Judge in what loneliness I live, separated from the only two beings whom I loved. Monsieur de Varambon, gratefully sacrificing all for love, renounced the state which was offered him, but I am assured that Don Juan has promised him places which may satisfy his ambition.

“ ’Tis thou, therefore, with whom I am at this moment occupied, my kind and gentle Helen. Should our mother think of disposing of thee in marriage, do not openly resist her will, for that would only make her

more obstinate, and plunge thee in greater misfortunes ; content thyself with asking time for reflection.”

Mademoiselle de Tournon paused in surprise ; her sister, whose rectitude of principle was known to her, argued exactly like the queen of Navarre. To speak with perfect sincerity then was not a duty ! To forego the expression of her real sentiments was not to be counted a fault ? She proceeded in the perusal.

Madame de Balançon stated, that she was about to accompany her husband into Spain. She desired her sister to write ; to communicate her thoughts and feelings, that she might

be enabled to judge of her situation and administer the advice of a tender and faithful friendship. After speaking in praise of Monsieur de Souvré's virtues, she urged her to confide to him her answer. "He deserves to be thy friend," said she, "trust to him entirely; if I know him well, he will be always thy friend, and only thy friend."

Helen was very glad that her sister's esteem for Monsieur de Souvré justified that with which he had from the first inspired her. She placed such perfect confidence in Madame de Balançon, that all the prejudices excited in her by the queen of Navarre were obliterated. She believed, as her sister had ob-

served, that he would be always her friend and no more than her friend. Freed from her painful doubts, she felt only the joy of knowing, that as Monsieur de Varambon was not at his brother's, he must have heard nothing of Monsieur de Souvré's letter. This thought rendered her so tranquil and happy, that she hastened to return to the queen of Navarre.

As soon as she appeared, Madame de Tournon asked her, in a severe tone, what she could have said to drive away Monsieur de Souvré. Helen calmly replied, that she had not said a word, which could offend him. — In fact, her own agitation at the time had prevented her from per-

ceiving the impression, which he had endured. Marguerite looking at her with attention, found her serenity to be so perfect, that Monsieur de Souvré's conduct seemed inexplicable. "I shall send and request him to come hither," said she, regarding Helen with those piercing eyes, which used to search the very thoughts. — But in this instance she could discover nothing that tended to explain the mystery.

She gave orders for Monsieur de Souvré to be sent for. In the interval she incessantly spoke to Madame de Tournon in an under tone, evidently with the view of repressing her ill-humour. It was soon announced, that Monsieur de Souvré

had shut himself up in his apartments, and was supposed to be taken ill; for he had given orders that no one on any account should come to disturb him. .

Thrice during the day Marguerite sent to enquire after him, and the same answer was always brought back. Toward midnight, however, he appeared, but so pale and haggard in countenance, that he seemed to be just recovering from a long illness. Marguerite uttered an exclamation of joy on perceiving him, and received him with a warmth of interest which would have affected him had not his mind been solely occupied with Mademoiselle de Tournon. Upon her were his eyes

fixed while the queen was speaking, and he knew not what was said to him.

Helen participated in his disquietude ; she regarded him with a mild look which melted him ; and he even thought he saw her tears ready to flow. Could he have been misled by an unfounded jealousy ? His heart again felt the pulse of hope ! All who were with the queen drew near him with anxiety. Madame de Tournon alone thought proper to retain her station and wait for him. Her pride at least enabled her never to compromise her dignity.

As soon as the queen of Navarre had resumed her place, Monsieur de Souvré approached Helen. At a

moment when the conversation became so general as to afford no apprehension of being overheard, he said to her in a very low tone, "I am solely occupied with your happiness. It is of the last importance that I should speak to you a moment; deign to instruct me how I may?"

Helen perceived that her mother and Marguerite never lost sight of her; she was disturbed, but said, "I am observed.... If you knew how much I wish to let you read my heart ..." — This last expression allowed not Monsieur de Souvré any longer to retain a doubt. Ah! had he been the person whom she loved, would she have dared to wish that he should read her heart?

The queen having announced her wish to be alone, every one retired. Madame de Tournon went away, followed by her daughter. She was provoked at her resistance, and offended to find her supported by a princess from whom she had always wished to keep her at a distance ; in fact, every thing co-operated to thwart the projects and contravene the wishes of this haughty woman. She perceived not that her stern and imperious disposition entirely frustrated the suggestions of reason.

Yet one secret source of satisfaction was left her. She knew that Monsieur de Varambon had quitted Paris. Though she guessed not the motive, she was certain he was gone,

and this was a great relief. But she knew not that Fisiraga accompanied him. The existence of this man, screened as he was from all eyes, by order of Catherine, had eluded her investigation.

As soon as she regained her apartments, she overwhelmed her daughter with reproaches, questions, and menaces ; the greater part of the night was passed in vituperation by Madame de Tournon, and by her daughter in weeping. Next day they had to restrain themselves anew ; for as soon as Marguerite was risen, she sent for Mademoiselle de Tournon.

She found Monsieur de Souvré on his knees, near the chair of the

queen, with whom he seemed to be concluding a long explanation. "Come, Mademoiselle," said he, "place yourself with me at the feet of her who has deigned to hear me, and who consents to protect you. Be pleased to regulate my conduct towards the public, dictate what I am to say when in presence of your mother, and believe that I am ready to sacrifice to you my happiness and my life."

Helen cast an enquiring look on the queen, who also invited her to rely on an affection which is rarely offered. Marguerite had been so affected by the impassioned devotedness of Monsieur de Souvré, that she forgot her projects, her conceal-

ments, her personal calculations. Her heart recovered its sensibility and its purity on witnessing an example of generous love.

Mademoiselle de Tournon, authorised by the queen, and encouraged by the recollection of her sister's advice, avowed, in a low tone, the sentiments which attached her to Monsieur de Varambon. "Ah!" rejoined Monsieur de Souvré, mournfully, "that then is the name of the mortal who has the right of making you tremble! It is true then?" He had guessed that she was in love, but to hear her own it, was a pain so unwonted and acute, that he found it insupportable.

Mademoiselle de Tournon ap-

proached him : she could have wished she had never existed, since, unhappy as she was herself, she had caused so much misery. He reassured her, prayed her not to afflict herself, and begged she would pardon him, if, at such a crisis, his pain subdued his strength. “ I feel only how much I have lost ; but rely on me, I will be your most faithful friend.” He raised his eyes to heaven, as if addressing the Searcher of hearts, and said “ your most faithful and your best friend.”

Yet he felt his need of solitude, and would go away. Marguerite recalled him, and asked what must be said to Madame de Tournon. He begged, that above all things,

they would think only of Helen. "Let us," said he, "lead her mother to believe that we have all the same intentions. I will return as soon as I can control myself, and we will then adopt a resolution. Mean time grant a single day to my grief. He ventured to take the hand of Helen, pressed it with respectful tenderness, and invoking heaven, said, "May she be happy!"

Madame de Tournon was irritated against her daughter, whom she held inexcusable for not being subject to her; against Marguerite, whose power had now counterbalanced her authority; and against Monsieur de Souvré, whom she considered as romantic as a woman, and as weak

as a child. She knew that the attentions he paid to Helen had awakened the public attention; that a report had been spread of their approaching marriage, which was now subsiding into wonder at its being postponed. A situation of which she could not speak openly, seemed something so strange to her that she felt humbled.

It was said that Monsieur de Souvré was sick; all saw that Mademoiselle de Tournon was in sorrow, and that her eyes were ever filled with tears; every one pretended to be perfectly well informed of the causes which had interrupted the marriage, and each explained them according to his fancy. Monsieur

de Souvré was so much esteemed, and Helen excited so much interest, that the general blame fell on Madame de Tournon alone; without knowing how, or why, every one said that the misery of these two interesting persons had certainly been caused by her untractable disposition. These comments were punctually related to her by some of those idle people, who are ever ready, through attachment, as they say, to tell you what you would rather not have known.

Happily for Helen, the public attention was drawn away to more serious affairs. The king suffered a hint to transpire that the war with the protestants was about to recom-

mence. Marguerite was in a situation of difficulty. Her duty called her to go to the king of Navarre ; her tastes retained her at the Louvre. Monsieur de Souvré, who might have been her counsel and support, kept himself shut up, and would see no one. At length she wrote to him, and begged that “ as a friend he would come and direct her at this critical juncture.”

Marguerite’s appeal to friendship revived all the tender affections of Monsieur de Souvré, and even restored him to reason. Shocked at having abandoned Mademoiselle de Tournon to the ill-humour of her mother, he resolved to see her again. In his grief he had neglected to wait

upon the king ; his state of health had indeed served as an excuse, but he felt that it was time to rouse himself from the melancholy which had at first wholly subdued him. That very day he went to court. He was so greatly altered, that the king expressed a sincere concern in the change. He feared, and yet wished to see Mademoiselle de Tournon once more ; and on arriving, he looked for no one but her. Their eyes met, but were instantly averted, with a mutual embarrassment, which did not escape the observation either of Marguerite or of Madame de Tournon.

The queen of Navarre passed into her cabinet, taking with her Mon-

sieur de Souvré. Helen could have wished not to await their return; but a glance from her mother fixed her to her place. Marguerite returned alone, Monsieur de Souvré having gone away through the interior apartments.

She approached Helen, and said in a whisper, "Be with me to-morrow morning at ten precisely." Returning immediately toward Madame de Tournon, she told her that the rumour so generally circulated, of the king's intention to attack the protestants, was confirmed.

This *heroine*, for such was the name reserved for her when battles were at hand, expressed her sincere satisfaction. She was beginning to

form plans of campaign, when Marguerite reminding her of her own situation, showed how unfortunate it was, at least for herself, to be thus placed between the king her brother, and her husband the king of Navarre.

The rest of the day was passed in useless reflections, impracticable projects, and sinister forebodings. Marguerite avowed that the resolution of breaking the peace, had been made during the festivities with which the court had so recently been amused. In these times of civil discord, it was in the midst of pleasures that men had to tremble for all that was dear to them.

Next day at ten, Mademoiselle de Tournon waited on the queen of Navarre, who received her with a smile of endearment. Helen had not experience enough to discover that she wished to gain influence over her mind, and she was therefore affected by this mark of kindness.

“ Monsieur de Souvré is coming, my dear,” said the queen; “ he wishes to learn from you how he is to conduct himself towards your mother. Yet, before he arrives, examine yourself well; reflect that you are about to lose the gentle, generous, indulgent man, who alone can realise to you that ideal perfection which your youth sought in vain. To be able to know the heart

of Monsieur de Souvré, is to understand virtue."

"Ah! Madam," answered Helen, "no one appreciates him more highly than I do. How grateful shall I be to heaven, if he can find a heart worthy of his own, a woman who may make him happy." "This then is the only sentiment which inspires you! And you would give him this fine consolation?" "Yes, Madam, for such is my daily prayer!" "Well," replied the queen, "I would have you to keep it between heaven and yourself, for I am apprehensive that it would deeply affect Monsieur de Souvré."

Helen was silent. It was easy

for her to see that she had much displeased Marguerite. Shall she not then be permitted frankly to express her thoughts, and give free play to her feelings, as she did when with her sister? How much she detested the task of being perpetually attentive, and on her own guard; not to be able to speak a word, or hazard a step, without anxiety as to the effect likely to be produced. The set and formal language necessary to be used at court was odious to her. She sighed for repose; she regretted the simplicity of rural life; and the remembrance of Monsieur de Varambon became more vivid and dear to her than ever. There she was like herself; here she must be con-

tinually studying to appear what others would have her be. What constraint !

Monsieur de Souvré was announced to the queen as requesting an audience. As soon as he appeared, Helen, by a momentary impulse, went some paces to meet him, but her timidity checked her. After an obeisance to the queen, he approached Mademoiselle de Tournon. “ No longer behold me, except as a tender brother, a devoted friend,” said he. “ I have found it difficult to submit to the misfortune of losing you ; but if I be not master of my sentiments, at least may I be certain to occupy myself on nothing except your happiness. Deign to let us know how you are situated, that the queen may

judge how it is possible to serve you."

Helen looked timidly at Marguerite. Monsieur de Souvré, following her eyes with his own, saw on the queen's countenance a severity which he had not before noticed. He guessed at the source of her displeasure, and even conjectured, in some degree, the conversation which had preceded his arrival. "Ah! Madam," said he, "is that what you promised me? I gratefully feel that your goodness for me makes you dread to see me unhappy; but it misleads you. Believe me, Madam, that now Mademoiselle de Tournon's sentiments towards me are known, if her mother should force

her to bestow her hand upon me, life would be a continual torture to us both. Were Helen sad, I should imagine that she regretted Monsieur de Varambon; and then could I depend upon myself so as to respect her sorrows, and not to render her answerable for my agony? No, no, Madam, she loves; she is beloved; may she be happy!"

Monsieur de Souvré having succeeded in softening Marguerite, Helen began a recital of what passed during her visit to her sister. She at first spoke of Monsieur de Varambon with embarrassment; but, impelled by the sentiment which animated her, she soon entered into all the details which occupied those days that had fled

too quickly away; days clouded with storms, and yet so much regretted. As she spoke, a profound sorrow stole over the countenance of Monsieur de Souvré. She remarked it, and approaching him, said, "Pardon me!"

He had listened to her without losing a single word. He saw how ill calculated Monsieur de Varambon's impetuous disposition was to ensure her happiness. Yet he did not allow himself to hazard a single observation which might hurt her; he merely asked, in a tremulous tone, "Do you think he will be able to render you happy?" "Yes," replied she, "if he be happy himself. I know that his anger is terrible;

but a look from me was sufficient to calm him. His faults are known to me; and you will certainly be astonished to learn, that perhaps they contributed to attach me to him; for they all disappeared when I spoke. At the height of his irritation, if he saw me afflicted, he was silent; and became master of his passions. Then, if I consented to smile on him, joy was in his heart, heaven was in his eyes. I felt happy in being able to render him worthy of being beloved by all, as he was by me. In short," said she, tenderly to Monsieur de Souvré, "I had over him the same command which you have over yourself."

What love, what devotedness, what simplicity, in these avowals of Helen! Monsieur de Souvré was moved by them, and he renewed his vow to sacrifice himself for her. But Marguerite, who had remained apparently unmoved, persisted in the resolution of leading her in softer bonds, by uniting her with a man so worthy of being beloved. "I know," said she, "that your mother will never consent to the marriage which you hope for." "I fear it as well as you do, Madam," replied Helen, "but then I shall retire from a world where I have found nothing but grief."

Monsieur de Souvré could not bear this, and he conjured her to relinquish so fatal a resolution.

“The grief which I endure would be too terrible,” said he, “if your happiness were not to be my recompense.” He desired to be sacrificed unsparingly ; he desired the queen to tell Madame de Tournon, that Helen hated him ; that he was odious to her. “Her mother will go into an intolerable fury,” replied the queen. “Well, madam, let us ensure the repose of Mademoiselle de Tournon,” cried he. “I will prevail on the king to employ me in this campaign ; and to order my instant departure. I can easily induce him to interpose his authority to prevent my marriage from taking place until my return. During my absence you will influence Madame

de Tournon, to consult the heart of her daughter ere she gives away her hand."

This resolution alarmed Marguerite. She had more occasion than ever for Monsieur de Souvré's interference in her behalf with the king. "In pity to us all," said she, "go not to that extreme. Your post is at court; the state needs your counsels. I shall endeavour to moderate Madame de Tournon's disposition; let us wait a little longer." Then, adverting to her own situation, she asked him what she was to do in the existing circumstances? "You must declare, Madam, in a high tone, that you will follow the fate of your husband, and protest

“that all laws, divine and human, require that you should be with him when perils are at hand.” “But,” said Marguerite, smiling, for mirth was always mingled with her grief, “are you very sure that they will not take it into their heads to yield to my entreaty.” He could not help smiling also; yet he cast a glance at Helen, and was happy to observe that embarrassment which a delicate mind feels, on seeing the objects of its love give way to reprehensible sentiments.

“I know, madam,” replied Monsieur de Souvré, “that you will not be permitted to rejoin the king of Navarre. They will urge the consideration of your personal safety,

and the danger of placing yourself as an hostage in the hands of the king's enemies. But, in truth, it is decided, that the most sacred ties are not binding when contracted with a protestant. Unhappily there prevails in both parties too great a disposition to recognize no laws as obligatory where there is a difference of religion. Encourage, madam, the diffusion of sounder principles, and in time you will extort the esteem of those who now blame you."

The court was in extraordinary agitation. All the great families were occupied in preparing for a campaign, which, they said, was to be the last. In such a way did

either party express itself, when it was first to break the peace. Marguerite, adopting the advice of Monsieur de Souvré, demanded leave to go and join the king of Navarre ; and, as he had foretold, she met with a refusal.

Every evening the persons who professed attachment to this princess, waited upon her to give their advice on the conduct she ought to pursue in regard to a brother and a husband. The most hazardous proceedings were thoughtlessly proposed. Several advisers boldly recommended the disregard of the duties which are universally binding, and are the most sacred in human affairs. The duke of Anjou, who had, in the first

instance, connected himself with the protestants, that he might withdraw from the authority of Henry III., was now preparing to make war on them, and could not endure that his beloved sister should again place herself in their power. He was not one of those great talkers who perceived admirably well the difficulties attached to all the determinations which the queen of Navarre might make, and yet could discover no means of extricating her from them with honour.

The projects of the court created family dissensions; the civil wars which raged in France destroyed the peace of private individuals. Happy would it have been, at least, if men

could have maintained tranquillity in their household, and sought to conciliate and console each other. But great public calamities are, so to speak, superadded, or, in the familiar phrase, more than bargain; the other afflictions of life fail not at the same time to flow in their usual course, and are even embittered by the animosity arising from difference of opinion.

Madame de Tournon wished that this time the sword should not be sheathed until the protestants were destroyed and heresy exterminated; yet as her town and castle of Tournon were again to be the theatre of war, she for that reason wished the more earnestly to have her daughter

married ; and she allowed her not a moment of tranquillity. Rarely was Helen seen without perceptible indications that she had passed the whole day in weeping.

On one occasion when Monsieur de Souvré observed her to be more afflicted than usual, he took a seat near her. Hearing no longer what was said around him, he suffered with her and for her. Suddenly, as if a new light flashed on his mind, he said, “It is done; I am resolved. Probably the time is near at hand when I shall see you no more. Will Mademoiselle de Tournon then deign not to forget the man who is so devoted to her?” He went away,

leaving her in the greatest disquietude.

On the next evening he waited on the queen of Navarre, and approaching Helen, whispered to her, "In prudence for yourself and in pity to me, betray not too much joy when you hear the news I am going to announce. Your happiness is more necessary to me than my life, but let my grief alone persuade me that it will be perfect ; for mercy's sake spare me the expression of it."

Without waiting for her answer, he advanced to the queen, and said, "The king has charged me to propose to you, Madam, a visit to Spa. The princess of La Roche-sur-Yon, to whom the waters are prescribed,

will bear you company. You love her; besides her rank and her age include all the agreeable requisites that should satisfy the king of Navarre. Knowing you to be thus out of France, Madam, during this war, which to you is a family feud, none of the parties will be able to accuse you of expressing wishes hostile to its interests, or of aiding its enemies by your advice." He added, tremulously, as if fearing lest Mademoiselle de Tournon should hear him, "The king has just dispatched a courier to Don Juan to obtain the necessary passports for traversing the Austrian Netherlands." Marguerite immediately replied in a low voice: "I know the mind, and I can estimate

the soul of him who advised this measure; in me he will find a faithful friend."

Monsieur de Souvré, unwilling to agitate himself with vain regrets, or be tempted with delusive hopes, immediately retired. He felt that he had not the strength to resist the alluring visions which Marguerite was incessantly presenting to him. Indifference supervenes and readily promises that time and reason will prevail over love! Besides, this princess, seeing Helen so gentle and timid, did not imagine her susceptible of a sentiment on which life might depend. Even Helen, perhaps, was not conscious of such susceptibility. The secret of impa-

sioned minds is never wholly known to themselves.

Madame de Tournon heard with horror of the project of passing through Namur. The idea that her daughter would again see Monsieur de Varambon, filled her with wrath. But the queen, who, at the first glance, had perceived how much she might, by this journey, serve the duke of Anjou, adopted the proposal most joyfully. She advised Madame de Tournon to be calm, or at least to restrain her feelings. She assured her that Helen should be so surrounded that she should have no interview with Monsieur de Varambon.

Yet when the queen of Navarre

was pleased, she would have all around her look happy. A dejected countenance she would have considered as a bad omen. Next day, as soon as she could take Helen aside, she promised her that she would speak with Monsieur de Varambon the moment she arrived at Namur.—“You see,” said she, “time arranges every thing. Even yesterday, I knew not what power to invoke that I might be extricated from my perplexities ; and now an admirable expedient is offered to us by a hand from which we could scarcely have expected it ; for it was Monsieur de Souvré who moved this project in the council.”

Helen, affected even to tears, re-

vered him as some guardian angel, who watched over her. “ Ah ! believe me, Madam,” said she, “ I am not ungrateful, and my esteem for Monsieur de Souvré is so perfect, my friendship so sincere, that perhaps I should have entertained towards him a more tender feeling, had I not known Monsieur de Varambon.”

Such was her emotion, that Marguerite, sympathising with her, hastened to repeat to Monsieur de Souvré the animated expressions used by Helen, which were even astonishing on the part of a person so reserved. They augmented his pain, and he replied with a sigh, “ See you not, Madam, that this ar-

dent gratitude to me is nothing more than the joyful hope of again seeing him whom she loves. Relinquish the hopes with which you have too often flattered my heart, and think only of Helen's happiness. I am setting out for the army. The king will join it in a few days with the queen-mother; endeavour, Madam, to be in readiness to quit Paris at the same moment."

He confessed to the queen that it would be too painful a task for him to visit Madame de Tournon before his departure. She undertook to make his excuses. "Be pleased also, Madam, to favour me by saying to her daughter, that to bid adieu is impossible, when it is to be

feared, and to be wished, that we shall never meet again.”

Don Juan was highly gratified by the intelligence, that he should soon see the beautiful queen of Navarre. He wrote to assure her, that she should have the command over all the towns in his government as over himself, and that he only solicited permission to be the first to welcome her, and to receive her orders.

This prince called around him the most brilliant young persons in the country, that he might place himself at their head, and form a retinue for Marguerite, confining his own ambition to the post of being nearest to her carriage. The most

considerable families of the Netherlands were invited to the festivals, which he proposed to give. It was his wish that every thing should bespeak his delight, his enchantment.

On quitting France, Monsieur de Varambon had retired to his estate. He had scarcely arrived there, when he became so dangerously ill, that David and Fisiraga often trembled for his life. He lay several days in a frightful delirium; and when he recovered his senses, the future affected him with horror. The joy of David, on seeing him revive, made him angry; yet he tolerated it that he might not grieve that old and faithful servant; but the satis-

faction of Fisiraga, whom he regarded as more enlightened, was a torture to him. “Why do you congratulate yourself?” said he bitterly; when I was overwhelmed with illness, I was unconscious both of my reason and of my pains I was drawing near the goal, without regretting, without anticipating anything; now I am yoked again to life and misery I must expect a long struggle against perfidy and ingratitude. . . .” — At other times he would exclaim, “You who have known the passions, know you not also, that the death which they cause, comes on slowly, but that each day brings a long and cruel agony?”

Yet as he gained strength, his grief became more communicative. A deep melancholy seized him; and Esiraga, far from being a consolation to him, seemed to add to his torments. That man's ardent mind allowed no repose to grief. He seldom quitted Monsieur de Varambon, who frequently could have wished to be alone. He spoke to him incessantly; became agitated, and put questions to himself for the sake of replying to his own thoughts. If he saw him ready to sink under his suffering, he gave vent to his hatred against women. One evening, when he dared to mingle the name of Helen in his imprecations, Monsieur de Varambon said to him, in a proud

and absolute tone, "Let us never recall the past!"

Ever from that moment he avoided Fisiraga, and passed his days in wandering about the country, speaking to no one, and appearing impatient if spoken to. He became like a savage, and no one could conjecture by what means he might be restored to himself.

One day Fisiraga was astonished to learn that Monsieur de Varambon intended to dine with him. He had hitherto excused himself, on the score of his health. Fisiraga in vain sought to divine the motive for such an unaccountable change, which however gave him great satisfaction; and he hastened to demand an explanation

of David. That excellent man, seeing him so attached to his master, mentioned, as a profound secret, that a courier from Don Juan had just brought an order for him to repair to Namur, and that the queen of Navarre was expected there with a numerous suite. He added, that from the emotion which he had seen in his master on reading Don Juan's letter, he did not doubt that Mademoiselle de Tournon was coming with the queen. Fisiraga, with all the susceptibility peculiar to the unfortunate, especially to those who, after enjoying considerable rank, have fallen into a state which is painful to their pride, was indignant that Monsieur de Varambon had not

sent for him, to acquaint him with a piece of intelligence so interesting to him. He suspected that, Helen's marriage having been deferred, from some unknown motive, Monsieur de Varambon perhaps hoped to revive her former sentiments. He saw that there was love in this weakness ; but he was offended with his friend for having concealed it from him.

“ I have watched over him,” said he, “ as if my life depended on his own. When he was seized with a frightful delirium, I dreaded that his reason was for ever gone ; if he shed tears, I wept in sympathy ; and perhaps he has received me here through pity. He certainly takes to himself great merit for having

afforded me an asylum. He sees me in his house, going and coming, and thinks that I feel too happy even in being allowed to breathe there !” This reflection made him quiver with rage.

From a repugnance which he could hardly overcome, he entered the dining-room as late as possible ; Monsieur de Varambon was there walking up and down, buried in mournful reflections, not at all aware that he had been kept waiting a long time. Fisiraga considered him with attention, and was astonished to find him still more gloomy than usual. Dinner passed off in profound silence, interrupted only by some insignificant phrases, ex-

changed at long intervals. The impatient Fisiraga could no longer endure this cold reserve, and said, " I have read somewhere, if my friend has a happiness which I know not of, it is his fault; if he has troubles with which I am unacquainted, the fault is mine." Monsieur de Varambon, occupied with his own thoughts, heard him not; he did not see that this man of a troubled spirit regarded him as the happy friend who deigned not to communicate the cause of his happiness, and who was silently comparing himself to the wretch whose tortures were not to be imagined.

Monsieur de Varambon's inattention offended Fisiraga. He could

not help talking to himself; no unusual expedient with him for venting his ill humour. “The remembrance of Amicia still agitates me,” said he; “yet no entreaty, no power should induce me to see her again.” Without being clearly aware of it, he might, perhaps, feel a secret satisfaction in disturbing the happiness which he was not allowed to participate. Monsieur de Varambon looked at him with uneasiness. “I must follow my destiny,” added Fisiraga. “I cannot bear to remain longer in ignorance of the fate of that insensible woman. I wish to ascertain it; if she is happy, I shall avoid her; if she suffers, I shall rejoice,” Monsieur de Varam-

bon again looked at him, but with a bitter smile. His countenance assumed a fearful expression ; he rose, and, without answering, left the room.

Fisiraga remained for some time buried in thought. He at length went away from that hospitable table, at which he resolved never more to sit down. His friend's want of confidence had offended him ; he determined instantly to leave him.

Having retired to his room, he wrote thus to Monsieur de Varambon : “ I remained with you, because I still hoped that the time would come when you would want a friend. But misfortune has left you no confidence ; even your joy is

mute; nothing has been able to open your heart. I quit you for ever."

He went very softly to Monsieur de Varambon's apartment, intending to place the letter at his door while he slept. He perceived a light, and saw that he was writing. He regarded him a long time, and felt, to his surprise, that his resolution was giving away; he looked, he was moved; he returned several times to behold him again. But arming himself with courage, he took away the letter, departed, and contented himself with wishing that he might be happy. At day-break he left the house, again to expose

himself to the storms of the passions, and to the difficulties of life.

How would his heart have been torn with remorse, had he known that Monsieur de Varambon, whom he had seen writing at such a late hour of the night, was occupied in making such arrangements as would ensure to him a tranquil existence, and was entreating him to remain during his absence, on that estate, of which he begged him to consider himself as much the master as he to whom it belonged.

Next day, as soon as Monsieur de Varambon awoke, he enquired for Fisiraga. David informed him that he had been seen to quit the house

very early, and that he had left in his room the letter which he now delivered. Monsieur de Varambon read it, and raising his eyes to heaven, exclaimed, “ Why should I be astonished at another instance of ingratitude ! ”

He called to mind with what solicitude he had passed the night, in making every provision that could render this unaccountable man happy ; his misanthropy augmented. Far from reflecting on his own conduct, or asking himself why Fisi-raga had embraced a wandering and perilous life, and preferred misery to the comfort of remaining with him, he perceived only the intentions which actuated his own

heart. They presented themselves to his melancholy spirit, and interposed between his own faults, which they concealed, and those of Fisiraga, which they exaggerated. But the unfortunate man whom he was condemning was not aware of those affectionate and provident attentions! No matter; he was culpable for not having conjectured them. Monsieur de Varambon, who deemed himself deceived in love, felt an additional pang on seeing his beneficence overlooked.

Fisiraga was pursuing his way without an asylum, without a resource; without knowing what would become of him on the morrow. He

bestowed no thought on that, occupied as he was in bewailing himself; nor could he enter on one of those self-examinations, so necessary to render us just towards others. He would not reflect, that Monsieur de Varambon's seclusion might be caused by the cravings of a wounded spirit. No: he chose rather to afflict himself, and to believe that his friend was desirous to make him feel his dependence. His tears flowed, on remembering with what anxiety he had watched by the bed of sickness; he appealed also to his secret intentions. What sacrifices would he not have made! "I would have suffered death to avert from him the slightest vexation;" said he, "and

the only return he offered me, was that ferocious look which repelled my attachment. I was nothing to him, and he was every thing to me.”

Monsieur de Varambon, shocked at first by so much ingratitude, at length began to grow dissatisfied with himself. By degrees, the anger which he felt at the faults of Fisiraga gave way before a more lively recollection of his misery. He saw him exposed to every danger; doomed to every privation. At length, after a long struggle, his goodness of heart prevailed. He hastened to seek the unfortunate man, whose attachment he could not call in question, though he was aware of his self-willed temper, and

his unquiet mind. As Fisigara was travelling on foot, he was easily overtaken. As soon as Monsieur de Varambon saw him, he alighted, and approached him, saying, "Do you think me happy then, that you abandon me." At these simple words, this touching expostulation, Fisiraga's resentment subsided; he breathed as if a genial and health-giving breeze had arisen to expand his heart; yet he wished to enter on what he deemed just grounds of complaint. But they no longer gave rise to reproaches: he alluded to them merely as reasons for his departure. Monsieur de Varambon mildly represented to him, that a sensibility too susceptible of alarm had

often rendered him unjust. Their voices were lowered to the tone which bespeaks a fear of giving offence ; their looks were no longer inflamed with anger. They wisely shunned the recollections which might have set them at variance ; and their sole feelings towards each other were the regret which accuses itself, and the affection which forgives.

“ I am going to see Helen again,” said Monsieur de Varambon ; “ and that thought gives me an agitation and dread which I cannot express. Sometimes I see her, as in the spring-tide of her youth and of our love ; my soul flies towards her ; but at the same instant Monsieur de

Souvré appears ; he stands between us, and seems to snatch her from my sight ! Then I breathe nothing but hatred and vengeance. Say, when you spoke to her of me, was she not seized with a deadly terror ?” — “ It is too true,” replied Fisiraga. — “ Did she not throw herself into the arms of that odious rival ?” Fisiraga raised his eyes to heaven, without daring to confirm by a single word so agonising a remembrance. — “ Did she not implore his support ?” Fisiraga pressed the hand of Monsieur de Varambon ; and this mute sign was a sufficient answer.

Monsieur de Varambon stood some time buried in thought. Suddenly he exclaimed, “ Have you

not heard the queen of Navarre herself declare, that Helen alone was worthy to be the happy wife of that man whom I abhor." Fisiraga, in the hope of calming him, replied, "Helen was dying, and neither a consent nor a refusal could proceed from her lips." "Would you have pardoned Amicia?" He made no answer. "Speak," said Monsieur de Varambon, "Would you have pardoned her?" Fisiraga trembled and said, "No ;" but hastily added, "yet, when you overtook me, I was going in search of Amicia. Ah ! who knows what dominion she might have had over my heart ?" Monsieur de Varambon shuddered. "And I also am going ; I am going to see,

once more, her whom I adored, her who alone attached me to life. I go ; but it is to present to her view the man whom she has sacrificed ; it is to make her regret the heart which she has ruined. It is my wish, that, struck with my indifference, with that absence of all recollection, she should ask herself, in astonishment, whether, in reality, she had ever been dear to me ! Yet, hear me ; I entreat, I conjure you, to let me take you back to my house, since you cannot appear before Don Juan. I know that the queen of Navarre is to remain some days at Namur ; I shall afterwards rejoin you. A secret terror forewarns me, that I shall still want a friend to watch

over my reason and my life." At this entreaty, Fisiraga's attachment acquired fresh ardour ; he could no longer refuse any thing, and he consented to return. Monsieur de Varambon, having quieted his anxiety concerning the fate of this unfortunate man, set out for Namur.

Meantime the queen of Navarre was occupied in preparations for her journey. But, wishing to dazzle the Flemings with the magnificence and brilliancy of her court, she took with her Madame de Tournon, her lady of honour ; Madame de Mouy ; the lady Castellan of Millon ; Mademoiselle de Tournon ; Mademoiselle d'Atrie, and eight other young persons, all of high birth and

distinguished beauty. The Cardinal de Lenoncourt, the Bishop of Langres, Monsieur de Mouy, her chief equerries, and several gentlemen of her household, accompanied her.

This royal pomp excited much admiration. Marguerite travelled in a litter, wholly enclosed in glass, supported by pillars covered with Spanish velvet of a carnation colour, embroidered with silk and gold. The glasses were painted with forty devices in Italian and Spanish. It was the car of a goddess.

The queen of Navarre made her entry into Cambray, a town which acknowledged the king of Spain as its protector. She was followed by those ten young ladies on horse-

back, led by the governess or “mother” of these maids of honour. The litter of the princess of La Roche-sur-Yon immediately followed that of the princess. The carriages followed in a line, and closed the train.

The Bishop of Cambray received this princess with the respect due to her rank. According to the usage of those times, he gave a superb ball, to which all the nobility of the country were invited; but, not choosing to be present at an amusement of this kind, he left to Count d’Ainsi, governor of the town, the charge of doing the honours.

Monsieur d’Ainsi was a true Frenchman at heart; hence the

queen required neither a long interview, nor much eloquence to induce him to espouse the interests of the duke of Anjou. While she was attending to her political concerns, the ten young ladies who formed her court, embellished the ball. Helen, who thought only of the happiness of again seeing Monsieur de Varambon, suffered a thousand anxieties at the delays which retarded their meeting. She was obliged, however, to dance, and to listen and reply to the vain compliments of admiration which annoyed her.

The queen of Navarre made a similar entry into Valenciennes, where she was received by the

Count de Lalain. That town was under his government, but it was at Mons that he fixed the scene of those festivities which he had prepared for her. Marguerite passed eight days there. She found the Count and Countess de Lalain still more disposed than was Monsieur d'Ainsi, to enter into her views. They had detested the Spaniards ever since the death of their relative, Count d'Egmont.

What torture for Mademoiselle de Tournon, to see herself always surrounded with pleasures, always obliged to appear gay and agreeable, when every instant seemed an age.

The queen of Navarre, resplendently beautiful, displayed by her

dress that desire to please which is always so gratifying in a queen, and which renders her ever certain of success. Solely occupied with her designs, she made some stay with all persons of eminence, and in her progress most liberally dispensed her salutations, her looks of approval, her gracious smiles. Thus she traversed those provinces, winning all hearts, and gaining the affections of those whom she wished to win as subjects to her brother.

As the moment drew near when Helen was to see Monsieur de Varambon, her emotions became so strong, that she could have wished to make all nature feel how happy she was. But her mother's presence

forced her to control her sentiments. She was very certain that Monsieur de Varambon was actuated by the same feelings, and that like her he had repined at the tediousness of the journey. What felicity to hear each other's voice after so long an absence ! What a satisfaction to inform him, that the queen of Navarre would use her influence to subdue the opposition of Madame de Tournon.

Mademoiselle d'Atrie could not account for Helen's extreme agitation. She could not remain in one place, and the pulsations of her heart were so quick, that she breathed with difficulty. It was her husband, her lover whom she was about

to see. At their first glance, a whole futurity of happiness would open to their view! A word, a sign, would at once reveal to Monsieur de Varanbon, that their union was decided. On all her features there beamed a rapture which she could not conceal. Her mother said some harsh words to her which no longer excited alarm. Her authority was powerless; Helen was too happy.

On arriving near Namur, the queen found Don Juan waiting for her at the head of a brilliant escort. The prince alighted, and bending his knee before her, received her as a sovereign. Monsieur de Varanbon was near him. The queen, on hear-

ing him named, fixed her eyes to the ground. She remembered her promise to a haughty and despotic mother to separate two young hearts, that only asked to live aloof from the world, and to enjoy their mutual affection in peaceful and unknown retirement. She could not forget that she had also given hopes of her support to Mademoiselle de Tournon. But accustomed to treat every thing lightly, these recollections, after causing a moment's embarrassment, were soon obliterated.

Don Juan remounted his horse to attend the queen. Her presence and that of the prince strongly reminded Monsieur de Varambon of that horrible crisis, when he saw

Helen fall swooning into the arms of Monsieur de Souvré. He thought himself again at the Louvre; his former agony seized him, and made him tremble. He cast a look at the group of young persons where Helen appeared so triumphant; for she had seen him, ere any of her companions could have noticed him. Her happy air gave Monsieur de Varambon pain; his sole wish was to retire. He followed Don Juan without raising his eyes again to view the court of the queen of Navarre.

This indifference struck Mademoiselle de Tournon with astonishment and apprehension. Was that the joy which ought to have been so lively? What a meeting after so long an ab-

sence ! Yet she cheered herself ; she sought excuses for him ; it would have been terrible for her not to find any. Surely he did not see her, and yet she saw only him.

The queen of Navarre alighted at the palace which had been allotted for her. Don Juan attended her, and directed Monsieur de Varambon to accompany the princess of La Rochesur-Von. Leopold, glad to see Helen again, offered himself as her conductor. He had no longer that timid reserve which Madame de Tournon's stern manner imposed on him when he was at the Louvre. At Namur, the post which he held near Don Juan obliged him to be attentive to all the persons composing

Marguerite's court ; but it was Mademoiselle de Tournon that he chose to distinguish with all the regard of a friend from childhood. He was so young when they lived together at the chateau of Monsieur de Balançon, that the remembrance of those happy days came to his mind blended with all the delights of boyhood.

Nothing was comparable with the magnificence of the hall destined for the reception of the queen of Navarre. It was profusely decorated with Turkish hangings of gold tissue. On every side there were twisted columns, covered with silver gauze, and hung with garlands of daisies (*marguerites*), and fillets of gold lace

embroidered with daisies, and bearing the motto *de esta flor ventura y vida** These flowers, brilliant and variegated in their colours, some natural and others artificial, were apt types of the mind and character of the queen of Navarre. That assimilation, however, was far from Don Juan's intention. In exhibiting such a profusion of daisies, he only wished to celebrate the name of her whom he delighted to entertain. The most exquisite perfumes of both hemispheres diffused a subtle and delightful odour. A thousand lights, veiled with white gauze, shone with an attempered brilliancy, and a soft and

* On this flower hang happiness and life.

hidden music seemed to invite the mind to indulge in tender emotions.

Marguerite could not withhold an exclamation of astonishment on entering this saloon. She walked up and down, examining all the gallant devices of Don Juan. Her attentive curiosity shewed that nothing escaped her. The persons composing her court followed, step by step, pausing when the queen paused. She praised; she admired; and Don Juan manifested a rapture so lively, yet so respectful, that Marguerite thought herself in a land of enchantment.

Poor Helen was the only one who took no share in these pleasures. She followed Monsieur de Varambon with her eyes, but his looks sought

not her. Supported by the arm of Leopold, she at length contrived to draw near the princess of La-Rochesur-Yon, that she might present herself before him whom she loved, and ascertain the motives of such unaccountable conduct. She heard the princess descant on the beauty of the hangings, and Monsieur de Varambon reply, that, at the battle of Lepanto, Don Juan having taken prisoners two young Turks, the sons of a pasha, sent them back to their father without accepting ransom, giving him to understand that their happy time of life had no enemies. Soon afterwards the pasha offered Don Juan this incomparable drapery as a token of gratitude. “The mo-

ment when the prince restored the two children to their father must have been very pleasing to his generous soul," added Monsieur de Varambon, and casting a disdainful look on Helen, he said, "The conquests of glory and those of vanity only make victims and inspire profound resentments."

He turned away instantly, with the purpose of leading on the princess of La-Roche-sur-Yon, and left Helen at a loss how to believe what she had witnessed. Could she be the person whom he dared to accuse? She breathed with pain. An insupportable weight oppressed her. All objects in her sight were confused; but the consciousness of what she

owed to herself still sustained her : the injustice of Monsieur de Varambon distressed and offended her, and she feared that he would perceive the pain which she was suffering. She asked Leopold if he knew what apartment was destined for her, praying him to lead her thither. She went out with him. What was it to her if the world observed this, provided Monsieur de Varambon did not witness her sufferings. Having reached the door of her room, she would not suffer Leopold to follow her ; and she remained in solitude, exposed to torture which she had never anticipated.

Monsieur de Varambon had hurried away like one who was afraid

both of his own anger and of his weakness. Hence he could not judge of the harm he had done to his unhappy friend; but when he saw her at a distance, going out with his brother, he was shocked with such imprudence. He thought himself authorised to blame her conduct, even when he would no longer consent to be her director.

Leopold soon re-appeared; the company crowded round him, desirous to know what had induced *Mademoiselle de Tournon* to retire from a festivity which her presence should have embellished? He answered, that the extreme heat of the saloon having incommoded her, he had led her to her apartment, and

that she seemed but too likely to be indisposed. Monsieur de Varambon had also approached; he was moved; he was concerned to hear that Helen was suffering. Madame de Tournon observed this, and resolved to complete the destruction of his hopes. Affecting that animated manner which the anxiety of an attentive mother might naturally excite, she said, “ The fatigues of this journey are too severe for the delicate health of my daughter, I am very sorry that I did not leave her at Paris as she desired me.”

She did not cast a single look on Monsieur de Varambon, nor did she appear to have seen him. It was a fact which she chose to state with the

utmost simplicity, and which must pierce the heart which she designed to wound. Monsieur de Varambon doubted not that Helen had wished to remain in France, that she might avoid seeing him. A deadly chill benumbed his heart. "She fears my presence, my reproaches," said he. "Well! she shall see me, and those complaints which she dreads, she shall not even hear!"

Marguerite and Don Juan approached Madame de Tournon to enquire after Helen. Monsieur de Varambon listened for her answer, and was breathless. A secret and last hope sustained him. He expected perhaps some new circumstance; perhaps he should catch an

expression, a word which would restore the tranquillity he so much needed. His eyes, his whole soul, awaited the decree of life or of death.

This pitiless mother noticed him ; and, emboldened by the absence of her daughter, she said to Don Juan, with a feigned air of discretion and half confidence, “ The queen is aware that hostilities must have commenced. The contrast of these festivities, with the dangers to which our friends in France are exposed, may well disturb a young heart in its first disquietude. I applaud my daughter for being unable to enjoy any amusement.”

Marguerite perceived the cruel import of this speech, and saw how

each word was selected, as it were, to lacerate the heart of Monsieur de Varambon ! She looked at him, and his grief affected and alarmed her. Yet her silence confirmed the intelligence which seemed to have been revealed by the anxiety of a mother.

She led Don Juan aside, and in a long private conversation confided to him Madame de Tournon's projects concerning her daughter. She expatiated on their advantages ; and the prince, at the same time, was informed of Monsieur de Varambon's passion for Helen. Don Juan felt for him, and regarded him with looks of interest and compassion.

Monsieur de Varambon saw that

they were speaking of him, and imagined that Marguerite expressed herself with a kind of offensive pity. At this juncture the serious look of her countenance seemed merely the specious mask of a pretended sensibility. Is he then the mockery of all around him? He went away resolving to prove that he would not be the slave of a foolish passion, or the dupe of unworthy perfidy.

While he was giving way to an excess of irritation, too well justified by the appearances which Madame de Tournon's words were adapted to exhibit, the unhappy Helen passed a horrible night. Sleepless and restless, she alternately indulged the indignation caused by

Monsieur de Yarambon's conduct, and the remembrance of those happy days when they loved each other so tenderly. Already enfeebled by the year of torture which she had just passed with her mother, she had not strength to support the anguish which preyed upon her heart. The joy which she had felt on the journey rendered her grief still more profound. After so lively a hope of the happiness which had been denied her, she felt as if she had fallen from the height of heaven into an abyss; and her sobs convulsed her so much, that she thought she was about to die.

Next day, terrified at the change she had undergone, she tried to

rally her strength and to obliterate the traces of her grief. She entered the saloon, in which were Marguerite and the whole court. She advanced, with pale mien and faltering step, scarcely conscious of existence. They crowded around her. Their solicitude, and their anxious questions as to her health, importuned her; she felt that if she made the slightest movement, or uttered a word, her tears would flow without control. Don Juan approached, took her hand, and pressed it within both his own without speaking. Helen felt grateful for his pity and his silence. A mournful and transient smile passed over her lips.... Why durst she not confide in him?

The queen of Navarre had decided on remaining only one day at Namur. Her intention was to descend the Meuse to Liege ; and she impatiently awaited the royal yacht which was fitting out to take her thither. The bustle preceding the departure, left Helen time to recover herself. Monsieur de Varambon came last into the saloon. He appeared with that abruptness and those quick incoherent movements which characterize the violent passions which distract the mind. He still fancied he heard the words of that cruel mother which had too thoroughly convinced him. The remembrance of Monsieur de Souvré haunted him ; his image was ever

before him ; and he strove to banish it in vain.

He took his seat by the side of Mademoiselle d'Atrie, because she was sitting with Helen, and he could be heard by her without speaking to her. He asked, with a gaiety which resembled a frightful delirium, if the danger of the French warriors had not disturbed her repose. Mademoiselle d'Atrie gave him no answer, for she understood not his meaning. — He spoke with a loud voice, and no longer understood himself. “ Surely,” said he, “ there must be one, who received a scarf to exalt his courage, and recompense his valour !” Then he mocked at sensibility, bravery, glory, all that

he had hitherto revered and cherished ; he laughed loud and long ! he laughed ! and his looks expressed fury.

Helen, ignorant of the dark and fatal insinuations of her mother, could not account for this species of distraction ; she was thunderstruck. They both alike avoided to speak to each other. Both feared to raise their eyes towards each other. They would have fled at the same time rather than have been left together ; yet on a single word did their destiny depend ! She could not support a pain so acute and so unexpected. All her blood rushed back to her heart ; all of life that was left her, was the wish to be freed from its torments.

It was announced to Don Juan, that the queen's yacht was ready. She instantly rose ; Madame de Tournon went with her, and called to her daughter to follow. There was a general agitation. The company crowded after the queen, and hastened to attend her. During this bustle, Mademoiselle d'Atrie took the arm of Monsieur de Varambon, because he was near her, because the disorder of his mind had terrified her, and because she especially feared to leave him with Helen, whose deep despair had not escaped her ; she drew him away against his will.

Helen saw him go ; followed him with her eyes ; she was seized with

an universal tremor. It would have been impossible for her to speak or move ; all seemed to be over. Inanimate, insensible to every one but to Monsieur de Varambon, whom she had so truly loved, she remained in her place without being remarked by any one. She did not even see that all were gone away ; that she was left alone in this now deserted hall. She remained, because she could scarcely breathe, and she felt she was dying.

Yet they sought her, they called for her ; every voice repeated her name. She heard nothing. Leopold hastened to her : “ What are you doing here ? ” said he ; “ the queen waits for you.” He took her

arm, and entreated her to go with him. Her paleness, her weakness, dismayed him. He supported her with difficulty ; he sought to revive her spirits. He ventured to say a word on the union which her mother destined for her. That thought restored Helen, for an instant, to herself. “ Never,” cried she, “ should I have consented to such a breach of faith. Tell him so when I shall be no more.”

This declaration was a satisfaction to her, and gave her strength to reach the spot where the queen’s yacht and her court were already stationed. Monsieur de Varambon, in torture at not seeing her come, had approached the bank of the

civer. Helen was obliged to pass him; she felt that she saw him for the last time; she quitted Leopold's arm; she hastily approached Monsieur de Varambon, and, raising her eyes to Heaven, said, "*Augustus, I forgive you.*" She fled instantly, and threw herself into the yacht; Mademoiselle d'Atrie received her, and placed her at a distance from her mother.

Every thing announced that the departure was at hand. Don Juan bent one knee to the ground, kissed the hem of Marguerite's robe, and retired. He found Monsieur de Varambon in a state of distraction; he pitied his grief; he took him and led him away.

Scarcely was the yacht in motion when Mademoiselle de Tournon uttered a piercing cry, which she could not suppress. Her heart was broken. The queen's physicians declared that she was dying, even before any one knew that she was taken ill. She said not a word ; she uttered no complaint. She was dying, because she could live on no longer. They laid her on a couch on deck. Her eyes were closed. The involuntary moans of acute suffering were the only signs that she still existed. The queen of Navarre, seized with terror, reproached herself for having thwarted so tender an attachment. All eyes were fixed on Helen. Her mother,

who, with all her apparent harshness, loved her, held her in her arms, called for the succours of art, and invoked the aid of Heaven.

Don Juan, on returning to his palace, dismissed all his attendants, retaining with him Monsieur de Varambon alone. He spoke to him ; he endeavoured to cheer and console him. “ Ah !” cried the miserable man, “ I did not deserve the pardon which she has granted me. I have been jealous, unjust, and she loved me ! I am certain of it. On quitting me, did she not call me Augustus ?” He would follow her, and place himself at her mercy. Don Juan prevailed on him, at least, to wait until she should arrive at

Spa. To ensure the happiness of a man whom he wished to make his friend was now the first wish of his heart. He promised he would write to Marguerite, and overcome all obstacles. That hope somewhat tranquillised Monsieur de Varambon, and gave him strength to endure suspense. But he received those promises of future happiness with a presentiment of fear which nothing could banish. He could not be at ease until he should have again seen Mademoiselle de Tournon.

After passing the day together, they had retired to a cabinet whither no one could come without express permission. Every moment

Monsieur de Varambon's disquietude seemed to increase. Don Juan, astonished at the agitation of his mind, would not leave him to himself; he compelled him to remain where they were.

Leopold had presented himself several times, and in vain insisted on being admitted. Next day he wrote to Don Juan, that it was indispensably necessary that he should see his brother, and that the slightest delay would, perhaps, occasion a terrible disaster.

This letter greatly alarmed Don Juan; he ordered that Leopold should be admitted. The youth affirmed that the report of Helen's marriage had been circulated from

malicious motives. “ Yes,” added he, as if struck with terror, “ she seemed dying when she said to me, as she went away, “ *Never would I have consented to such a breach of faith. Tell him so, when I shall be no more.*”

“ When she shall be no more !” exclaimed Monsieur de Varambon. A death-like paleness overspread his face ; despair and remorse rent his heart, and he was so convulsed, that he had scarcely strength to express himself. The interval which had elapsed since Helen’s departure made him tremble. He would set out instantly. Don Juan no longer objected. A boat was in readiness ;

he hastened to it, and embarked with Leopold.

What a voyage! cabined in that small boat, on that tranquil river, he would have leaped the bounds of space and time: he chafed; he talked to himself; he shrunk from the future, which chilled him with terror; he invoked the past, which condemned him. Remorse fastened on his heart; an inward voice said to him, “Cruel man! remember how she loved thee! how she shared all thy impressions! how she felt them more strongly and vividly than thyself! Didst thou smile? happiness beamed through all her features. Hadst thou the slightest pain? she was stung with grief.

Call to mind the moment when thou wast not master of all her affections. Name an instant when thou couldst not have disposed of her life. Was there not within thee then, a voice, a sentiment, to warn thee, that the ill which should be caused to her by thee, would be her death?"

He was a terror to himself; he cried aloud, he raised his eyes to Heaven; he threw timid glances on Leopold, as if he asked pardon of God and all nature. In this horrible situation, in this long and painful struggle, passed the two dreadful days that their voyage occupied.

At length, they arrived at Liege. The streets were filled with an immense crowd, which impeded their

progress. They saw a funeral procession at a distance. It approached; the car was covered with white cloth and silver tissue, hung round with crowns of white roses. Monsieur de Varambon shuddered and grasped the hand of his brother; his trembling lips could not utter a syllable. His distracted look drew the attention of an old man, who went before the procession. He passed them, saying, "Poor Mademoiselle de Tournon!" Monsieur de Varambon fell lifeless. He was carried into a neighbouring house, where he lay many hours in a swoon. Unhappy man! What a recovery must his be!

The procession slowly advanced

to the church. The funeral chaunts implored of Heaven the peace of another life for her who in this world had known only misfortune and suffering.

Towards evening Monsieur de Varambon came to himself; he uttered dreadful cries; he called on Helen, he could not convince himself that he had lost her; he demanded her of his brother; begged him, conjured him, to restore her to him; he would see her again. He escaped; and Leopold, unable to detain him, followed. They arrived at the church. The crowd had gone away. The ceremony of burial was not to be performed until next day; Helen's corse lay in state

in an illuminated chapel. This light was his guide. A priest who knelt there was reciting prayers. Monsieur de Varambon threw himself at the foot of the coffin.

The priest, astonished at his presence, and terrified at his despair, looked anxiously at Leopold, who said to him, "She was to have been his wife." The pious and charitable man pitied him, and retired to a distance, that he might not constrain his grief.

The unfortunate youth, subdued with affliction, prostrate on the ground, was afraid to raise his guilty head, and incessantly repeated that he ever loved her; that he loved her now, and would follow her. At

length, he ventured to lift his eyes, and to gaze on that inanimate countenance which as yet was not concealed by a veil. His convulsive cries made the church echo. Wretch! who hast broken a heart which existed only for thee! He wrung his hands; he wept; he accused himself; entreated Heaven to grant him only an instant, a single instant. Let her once more see him, and then let both die! "Let her know that I loved, that I adored her!" exclaimed he with uplifted eyes. His brain wandered; he looked; he paused; he listened. The silence of death alone was his reply. A gloomy distraction was in his eyes; he stretched forth his arms,

and exclaimed, “ Will she then never hear me? never?” and the vaults of the church resounded—
NEVER!

THE END

